Canada's Weekly Newsmagazine
# Maclean's
September 20, 1999



ADRIENNE CLARKSON: TO RIDEAU HALL, WITH ATTITUDE

ROMANCE WRITING SEX, LOVE AND MONEY

# The Search for Roots

How technology is opening pathways to the past



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Canada's Weekly Newsmagazine

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## Cover



Paul Chiasson/CP Photo

## 42 The search for roots

Aided by modern technology, Canadians are scrambling as never before to fill out their family trees with names and history. For most, it is merely a happy obsession. But for those with an inheritable disease, it can be a life-and-death quest. The Internet makes it easy to get started

## Features



Jean-Marc Carisse/CP Photo

**Special Report**

### 18 To Rideau Hall, with attitude

She is opinionated and steel-willed, gracious and charming. Will Adrienne Clarkson be content with a ceremonial role as the country's 26th governor general?

### 30 Reprisal in East Timor



AP Photo

As the world watched helplessly, marauding gunmen loot and kill in the Indonesian province after an overwhelming vote for independence.



Hutchison Enterprises Ltd.

### 58 Sex, love and money

Romance writing has its own culture, complete with a convention this week in Toronto where loyal fans can meet the authors who provide their fixes of fictional love and lust.

From the

# Editor



## Who says the GG has to be boring?

**Only in Canada.** Or, perhaps, only in Toronto? The Prime Minister appoints a female Chinese-Canadian immigrant to be governor general and a columnist attacks her for being too WASPy And, oh boy, just watch that loose cannon of a husband, with all his leftist views, and the couple's penchant for the salon over Main Street.

I should declare a shortcoming: I have no insider knowledge of either Adrienne Clarkson or John Ralsron Saul, their manners, morals or their artwork The appointment is controversial, to be sure. He vows to be as voluble as she is In this case, Clarkson-Saul will be an unconventional vice-regal twofer.

But the appointment has its merits. What Ottawa surely needs in this time of minimalist governance and drab personalities is someone who is not afraid to pronounce a vision and who wants to do something with the office. Sure, it is largely a ceremonial outpost. Ed Schreyer read the encyclopedia in his ample spare hours. Roméo LeBlanc, the outgoing GG, once joked that his advantage over the Prime Minister was that, during state visits, the PM *had* to come to his formal dinners, but protocol did not require him to show up when the Prime Minister entertained Pierre Trudeau's most frequent purpose in crossing Sussex Drive to Rideau Hall was to pluck his daily rose from the greenhouse.

In fact, you would be hard-pressed to think of anything of lasting substance that any of Clarkson's predecessors have done in office—at least since Lord Byng of Vimy refused Prime Minister Mackenzie King's request to dissolve Parliament and avoid a censure motion in 1926, thus ushering Arthur Meighen into his second brief tenure in office.

But there are important things that the Queen's representative in Canada can do For starters, the right person can offer quiet counsel to a Prime Minister Schreyer and Trudeau often discussed sensitive matters of state. Who's to say that the bilingual Clarkson and Saul, and their network, will not enrich the Prime Minister's handling of the next unity crisis, when it comes next year with another Quebec referendum

For all the lamentations about their alleged lack of common touch, Clarkson-Saul also may be able to project important and quintessential Canadian values. As an immigrant and refugee herself, Clarkson sends a positive message about the merits of industry and tolerance. As well, Ralston Saul has been an advocate of a new reform coalition of anglophones and francophones, on the model of Lafontaine and Baldwin, who helped forge unity between Lower and Upper Canada in the mid-1800s.

The most intriguing aspect to the appointment is that both Clarkson and Ralston Saul have espoused views not shared by the Prime Minister. He went so far in a 1997 book, *Reflections of a Siamese Twin*, to accuse Chrétien of moving so far to the right that he "undermined the essential political coalition which makes Canada work." It promises to be an interesting reign

Robert Lewis

## Newsroom Notes

### Personal journeys

**Senior Writer** John Nicol began researching his own family tree five years ago when he returned to Scotland to scatter his father's ashes Then, he had to visit graveyards and scan microfilm in Edinburgh. Now, with the explosion of genealogical information on the Internet, much of this can be done from home. For this week's cover story, Nicol went to Salt Lake City, where the Mormon Church has compiled the world's largest collection of vital statistics (page 42). "What amazed me was how many Americans were researching their Canadian roots," says Nicol. "Each story I heard added to the puzzle of putting Canada's history together."



*Sheppard (left), Nicol and Oh, tracing ancestors through the Internet*

The cover package was organized by Senior Writer Robert Sheppard. It includes Associate Editor Susan Oh's explanation of how, for many Koreans and Chinese, the family tree is embedded in their names, along with Science Editor Mark Nichols's look at the way anthropological discoveries are changing the human tree. Assisting the writers was Researcher/Reporter Patricia Treble—whose father, Don, is one of the rapidly growing number of Canadians and Americans who are spending their retirement energies in the fascinating pursuit of their roots.




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# The Mail

## Online implications

**I would** like to congratulate you on an excellent article ("Back to school online," Cover, Sept 6). I am a graduate of the master's of distance education program at Athabasca University and commend it highly to anyone interested in educational technology, course design or program design. Preparing to enter study for an MBA, I found the Athabasca University program well suited to my needs. Living in Canada's North poses many challenges. Athabasca University has increased access to higher education for many of us. I applaud its success and support its continued efforts in this area.

**Janet Mundrick,** Director, Corporate Programs, Aurora College, Inuvik, N.W.T.



Mike Peddle for Maclean's

*Grade 12 class online in Athens, Ont.*

**Your article** omitted one of the key strengths of online education. Courses so specialized that they appeal to only a few hundred students nationwide can only be delivered cost-effectively online. Canada's not-for-profit community—longtime suppliers of distance education—has moved rapidly to embrace the online opportunity. The Canadian Society of Association Executives' association management education program attracts worldwide interest. Online education also allows rapid improvement to course quality. Research and case studies prepared by students can be incorporated into course content. David Johnston's and Heather-Jane Robertson's concerns about the lack of human interaction are valid, but the Internet is an irreplaceable tool in specialized education.

**Michael Anderson,** President and CEO, Canadian Society of Association Executives, Toronto

**Dianne Looker,** the vice-president of the Acadia University faculty association, makes no mistake when she states that "a lot of battles are going to be fought around online courses." It isn't, however, only online courses that raise such fierce opposition from faculty. Any initiative that threatens to reduce the role of teachers as classroom lecturers—that isn't under direct control of faculty—will be bitterly opposed.

**Cathy Tekatch,** Grimsby, Ont.

**Although I** enjoyed your article about online education, I was disappointed that Royal Roads University in Victoria was not mentioned. This institution is at the forefront in Canada in delivering high quality master's programs through distance learning combined with short on-campus sessions. As a recent Royal Roads undergraduate, I can assure you that what this university is doing, especially in terms of developing leaders, deserves attention, and your readers deserve to know about it. Royal Roads has a genuine commitment to building a stronger Canada by developing in students those leadership values that are so notably absent in business and politics today.

**John Brackenbury,** Victoria

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## Cause and effect

**Don't shoot** the messenger—in this case the migrants ("Children at sea in a new land," Canada, Aug. 30). Before becoming "illegal" immigrants, these people became victims. The economic policies and international agreements that our glorious First World governments enter into with multinational corporations allow the plunder of the Third World. These corporations ravish their natural resources and pay exploitative salaries, forcing people to abandon their families and places of origin in search of just compensation for their labour. We lucky people who live in the First World should demand that our governments stop the escalation of the rape of the Third World and its citizens. If fair salaries were paid throughout the world, there would be no more illegal migrants.

**Carolina de la Calja,** Vancouver

## Levy on recording

**Charles Gordon** omitted one of the main reasons many users of CD recordables are reluctant to pay a levy that supports Canadian songwriters and recording artists: they are not using CD recordables for pirating music, but rather as a storage and distribution medium for computer programs and data ("A small price to pay," Sept. 13). There is no connection to the music business and it is not an illegal activity, so why should these users pay a penalty? Other entertainment industries manage without this kind of assistance; perhaps it is time for the music industry to put its house in order and stop expecting the public to support it by means other than direct payment for services rendered.

**Robert Fysh,** Toronto









## Helping runaways

**I moved out** of my parents' home at 16 and I, too, was attracted to street life ("The anguish of the street," Special Report, Aug. 23). But my parents, instead of fighting a losing battle, took a deep breath and let me go. Despite a few mistakes, I managed just fine. I am now a wife, mother and PhD candidate. What kept me off the streets and out of trouble? In two words, Dad's signature, without which, as a minor, I could not have obtained a decent job or leased an apartment. There will always be children who can't, or won't, be helped. But in many cases, providing teenagers with the legal means to lead decent, independent lives *before* they become heavily involved in street life might protect them best against the "dark side" and its temptations.

**Natalia Boisvert,** Edmonton

**As a professional** social worker who works with young people, I agree that many kids run away from parents who care about them. What concerns me is the way parents show how they care. Parents who are authoritarian in style often want to break the young person's spirit at a time when it is essential the youth find a sense of personal identity. Compliance is rewarded and difference is not tolerated. Young people need unconditional love and acceptance from their parent figures. This does not mean that the parent must become permissive and condone actions that are not respectful. This means listening with the heart as well as the mind, and setting reasonable, age- and stage-appropriate expectations. Like adults, children and young people gravitate towards places where they feel loved, supported and accepted. Parents of runaways would benefit from spending less time blaming themselves or their children for their difficulties and focus on connection with, rather than control over, their runaways.

**Sharon Hodge,** Kelowna, B.C.

**Rusty's story,** in particular, really got to me. How could a father turn away his 13-year-old son from his door after his mother had abandoned him? With our Canadian affluence, humanity and love of children, we should build a mega-centre of life and learning for runaway kids in each province. Offending, irresponsible, abusive parents should be brought to task and legally required to financially support these centres. Such centres would not only offer food and shelter, but also jobs, educational programs and opportunities for sports, artistic expression and recreation. Street kids would be empowered to help run the entire program, which would raise vital self-esteem. Build the centres and the kids will come. The payback to society in both human and economic terms would, in the long term, more than compensate for the expense and human effort required to build such centres.

**Brian MacKinnon,** Winnipeg

**You emphasize** some very pertinent facts about homeless and runaway youth: the vast majority of street kids have run away from physical or sexual abuse at home, and there is a void in providing services for this troubled population. In Vancouver, there are an estimated 500 to 1,000 kids living on the streets on any given night. And while there are safe places where young people can stay for up to a week, there are few places that they can call home for any length of time. One of them is Vancouver's Covenant House, a crisis intervention centre and residence for homeless and runaway youth. Young people who are looking to get off the streets can stay with us, in their own room, for as long as it takes to reach their goal. Working from a social work perspective, we encourage young people to commit to a plan to get off the streets, whether it be going to school, getting a job or returning home. These young people need counselling, support and unconditional love to heal the wounds of their past. Obviously, more needs to be done, but it will take the efforts of the kids themselves, social service providers, parents, the community, government, etc. If the abuse of children can't even be prevented in their own homes, how can we expect the streets to be any safer?

**Sandy Cooke,** Executive Director, Covenant House, Vancouver

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## 'Onex-orable' deal

**Gerry Schwartz's** Onex-orable proposal for a single national airline for Canada—which would forever bear the unflattering name of Air Ger—flies in the face of all sense of fairness, even in the worlds of business and politics ("Air Gerry," Business, Sept. 6). Over the past decade, Canadian Airlines has demonstrated with textbook precision how *not* to run an airline. Its panhandling panache for extracting government handouts has only driven it deeper into the red. Standard rules of business dictate that Canadian Airlines should have been taken off life-support years ago, but the government kept infusing it with monetary placebos in hopes of gaining much-needed western votes. Maybe finally, it will be rewarded, as Schwartz's plan simply lets the loser win—at least on the surface. But over time, the real winner will be American Airlines. Why else would it donate half the funds for Schwartz's deal if complete control wasn't in its grasp?

**Keith Hatfield,** Halifax

**Air Canada** has three times the debt of Canadian Airlines, and with the exception of last year, any profits made by the airline have been achieved by the sale of assets, not by operations, something that is confirmed by Air Canada's share value, which has hovered at around $6 for the past decade. Canadian is a viable airline by way of its value to American Airlines, and will survive in some fashion with or without a merger with Air Canada. Surely Air Canada is equally desperate for a solution to the woes that beset the Canadian airline industry.

**Nick Beveridge,** Burlington, Ont.

**Dalton Camp's** column on the Air Canada-Canadian Airlines merger carried more punch than anything I've seen from our so-called left lately ("Once upon a treasured airline," Sept. 6). It's about time more Canadians wake up to how deregulated competition only leads to greater monopolies, higher prices and declining services. Perhaps if we ever questioned why a level playing field should be created by removing rules, we might eventually recognize that "globalization" isn't about corporations competing for our business, but the public competing for theirs.

**Gavin Hearn,** Mayne Island, B.C.

## Immigrant burden

**In the context** of today's illegal Chinese immigration, it may be interesting to look at legal but unwanted British immigration in the early 19th century ("Children at sea in a new land," Canada, Aug. 30). British immigration, encouraged by the English merchants of Montreal and Upper Canada Loyalists in order to people the wilderness and to offset the French-Canadian preponderance, rose steadily after 1825, reaching 50,254 in 1831. The poverty stricken immigrants were packed into the unhealthy holds of the timber ships coming back to Canada (not much different from the smuggled Chinese refugees). After a long voyage that was more often a battle for survival, they were put ashore at Quebec and Montreal, frequently penniless and disease-ridden. Many became public charges, in 1832, the Quebec assembly passed a bill establishing a head tax, to be paid by the captains of the immigrant ships, to offset the financial burden the immigrants caused. Immigration became, to certain wild French-Canadian eyes, an English conspiracy to wipe them off the face of the earth. Many of those early immigrants were victims of shipping agents and land speculators who hoped to profit from the human cargo. While the new illegal immigrants should receive compassion, those who are involved in the smuggling of human beings should be treated firmly.

**Mahmood Elahi,** Ottawa

***Maclean's* published** an article about smuggling Chinese illegal immigrants to North America, twice mentioning the name Lithuania ("Canada's open door," Cover, Aug. 23). Readers might be left with the impression that Lithuanian



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## Editorial Update

### Maclean's columnists: Informed, provocative

Although the topics they cover are often miles apart, Maclean's award winning columnists share a passionate interest in their subjects, and the experience required to fully investigate and illuminate these issues

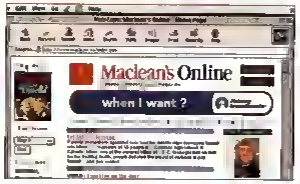
As Maclean's national affairs columnist, Anthony Wilson-Smith makes it his business to scrutinize the country's politi cal scene at both the federal and provin cial levels—and his stints as Maclean's Quebec editor (1983-86) and Ottawa edi tor (1990-98) prepared him well for this assignment

Wilson-Smith's *Backstage* column highlights the politicians and public figures who dominate the country's political arena, as well as individuals who deserve to be better known for their works Wilson-Smith is also keenly interested in keeping tabs on a business he knows well—the media—since the way journalists portray news events often influences how Canadians view each other

"The goal of a columnist is to be informed and informative," says Wilson Smith "Whether or not the reader agrees with the writer's point of view, when they finish reading, they feel they've learned at least one or two new things "

In his regular column, Anthony Wilson-Smith takes Maclean's readers behind the news and into the lives of his subjects demonstrating that issues and people are usually much more complex than they first seem

## Newsstand Notes




Designed with subscribers in mind, the Maclean's new Web site (www.macleans.ca) offers full access to all of the news stories and profiles featured in the current issue of the magazine, available on the Sunday before the printed magazine hits newsstands As well, Maclean's subscribers have access to a searchable archive of issues from the past six months—perfect for school assignments or business needs—and can review the status of their subscriptions. Non-subscribers are invited to scan highlights of all the stories featured in the current issue of Maclean's, plus check out special sections on film, music, technology, personal finance, education and health

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# The Mail

ships smuggle illegal immigrants to North America and that, in this case, these people boarded a vessel while it was in Lithuania. Neither is true. Lithuanian institutions are very serious about their international commitments and they are doing their best to control the flow of illegal refugees through Lithuanian territory. Lithuanian authorities were closely watching the ship, which was hiding illegal human cargo, cargo that obviously got on the ship before she entered Lithuania.

**Ambassador Alfonsas Eidintas,** Embassy of the Republic of Lithuania, Ottawa

## Judges making law

**The issue** of judges being out of touch with Canadians is shown not so much by the pronouncements of such as retiring Chief Justice Antonio Lamer of the Supreme Court of Canada ("Activists in black tobes," Canada, Sept. 6), but in the sentence imposed on Fredericton shopkeeper George MacFarlane ("Vigilante shopkeeper," Canada Notes). MacFarlane, who received a conditional sentence for firing a shotgun at thieves robbing his store for the—count 'em—sixth time, was also ordered by the judge to take an "anger management course." I wish the judge in this case would explain to me just why MacFarlane shouldn't be angry, when anger is the only rational response. MacFarlane, I'm pleased to see recorded by *Maclean's*, is "unrepentant."

**Wally Moran,** Orillia, Ont.

**Justice Beverley McLachlin** used *ignoratio elenchi*, the art of answering any question except the one that was asked, when she said: "[The Supreme Court] does not march out and say, 'We think there is a problem here—we are going to rule on it.'" That is not what troubles Canadians about the Supreme Court. It is what appears to be its tendency to make, rather than rule upon, law, and to make mystifying judgments, costly to well-meaning citizens, without giving reasons so that we can be guided in future. The Supreme Court had better get used to it; an increasingly sophisticated, less-than-patient, overgoverned citizenry will often criticize its rulings and the very methods by which it is constituted. Judges call it judge-bashing. Do we, the lay peasants, hear what might be called judge-whimpering?

**Frank Gue,** Burlington, Ont.

## Goodbye to Eaton's

**I said goodbye** to a friend today. When I was a child, visiting her was a real event—we even dressed up for the occasion. I spent hours glorying in her toys, and later explored her books and clothing. She fitted me with my first three pairs of glasses, and helped me learn how to sew by providing me with patterns and supplies. When we got tired, my mother and I would have tea in her magnificent dining room. I hardly recognized her when I visited her today; everything was expensive and in the wrong place. But I will certainly miss Montreal's downtown Eaton department store ("The end of Eaton's," Business, Aug. 30).

**Mary Ruth Gehr,** Montreal

## Gospel truth

**Allen Fotheringham writes** that Matthew Fisher's father named four of his sons (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John) after Christ's disciples ("An apostle of the black art," Aug. 30). In fact, only two of those names (Matthew and John) appear in Gospel lists of disciples (more accurately, apostles). Mark and Luke had no direct contact with Jesus, but were supposedly later companions of Peter and Paul, respectively. It would be more accurate, therefore, though less felicitous, to say that the four sons were given the names attached to the titles of the four Gospels.

**Charles P. Anderson,** Professor Emeritus, Religious Studies, University of British Columbia, Kamloops, B.C.

**Matthew, Mark,** Luke and John were faithful believers, brilliant theologians, dedicated researchers and like Matthew Fisher, engaging writers, but not in the picture at the Last Supper.

**Rev. John H. Brown,** Port Perry, Ont.

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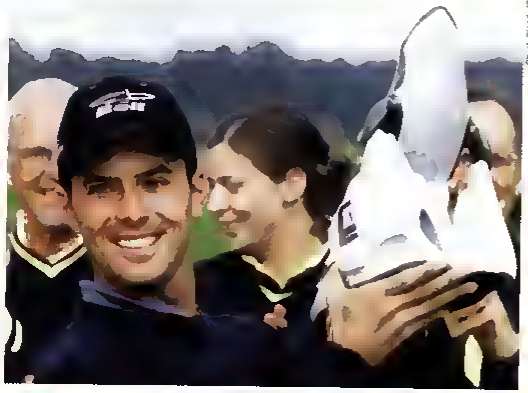
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# Notes

Edited by Tanya Davies





Chuck Stoody/CP

CP Archive

*Balding: Weir with Air Canada trophy (left); it's impossible to judge golfers across eras*

## The best of financial times

**When Mike Weir,** a lefthander from Brights Grove, Ont., won the Air Canada championship in Surrey, B.C., on Sept. 5, he did more than just record the first PGA Tour victory by a Canadian on home soil in 45 years. The winner's cheque for $450,000 (U.S.) made the 29-year-old—who lives in Draper, Utah, with his wife, Bricia, and their 20-month-old daughter, Elle—the first Canadian to ever top $1 million in Tour earnings in a season. That said, his is by no means the most successful year ever by a Canadian. When annual prize winnings are adjusted to take account of whopping purse increases on the major tours, the totals of several stars from previous eras top Weir's. In 1979, Sandra Post of Oakville, Ont., won $178,750. But since then, the total LPGA purse has climbed to $36.2 million from $4.4 million, which makes Post's earnings worth $1,470,625 today. On the PGA Tour, George Knudson of Winnipeg won twice and collected $64,106 in 1968, in 1999, that would be worth $1,662,746. The best year ever? In 1957, Al Balding of Mississauga, Ont., collected $20,025. Back then, the total PGA Tour purse was $820,360; this year it is $131,700,000. So in 1999 dollars, Balding would have earned $3,214,799. And while it is impossible to judge the best Canadian golfer of them all, it *is* clear that Weir has the best timing.

## Pop Movies

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | The Sixth Sense (157/5) | $2,838,430 |
| 2. | The 13th Warrior (150/2) | $1,279,990 |
| 3 | Chill Factor (212/2) | $884,030 |
| 4 | The Thomas Crown Affair (131/5) | $764,070 |
| 5 | Runaway Bride (153/6) | $750,340 |
| 6. | Mickey Blue Eyes (158/3) | $733,300 |
| 7. | Bowfinger (161/4) | $575,230 |
| 8. | Outside Providence (156/2) | $477,350 |
| 9 | The Blair Witch Project (141/6) | $466,650 |
| 10 | The Astronaut's Wife (131/2) | $336,210 |

Top movies in Canada, ranked according to box-office receipts during the seven days that ended on Sept. 9. (In brackets: numbers of screens/weeks showing.)

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## Costner throws a slow ball




Part *Tin Cup* and part *Bull Durham*, Kevin Costner's latest movie, *For Love of the Game*, revisits old territory—an aging baseball player makes life-altering decisions about his career and his relationships. Detroit Tigers pitcher Billy Chapel (Costner) is in the twilight of his career. During a pivotal game at Yankee Stadium, he pitches a perfect game, amid flashbacks of his career as a sports hero and his long-distance love affair with Jane Aubrey (Kelly Preston), a magazine writer who lives in New York City. As Billy deals with the emotions of an imminent trade to the Giants and Jane's job offer in London, the film becomes another Costner-centred sentimental sports epic.

## Dark and purple prose

*The rules to the Bulwer-Lytton Fiction Contest are simple: compose the worst possible opening sentence to an imaginary novel. Created in 1982 by an English professor at San Jose State University in California, the competition is named after the minor Victorian novelist Edward George Bulwer-Lytton, author of* Paul Clifford, *whose famous first words, "It was a dark and stormy night," have been repeatedly ridiculed. This year's competition attracted thousands of submissions from around the world, and two Canadian entries were deemed to be among the worst. Winnipeg's Roger Strong won the Science Fiction division and Allan Burrows of Mississauga, Ont., was runner-up in the Dark & Stormy Night pun category. At their execrable finest:*



*Bulwer-Lytton: much ridiculed*

Corbis

**Strong:** The remaining astronauts strung out on the long tether could only wonder at a universe full of eerie contrasts—brilliant stars against the velvety blackness of space, the hot flare of their comrade's meteoric plunge into the atmosphere against the cold-blue ocean below, the man's frenzied screams on the radio as he was roasted by the heat of re-entry against the icy calm voice of mission control as they grilled the astronaut on the far end of the tether, and how hilarious it had all seemed when he first yelled "Crack the whip!"

**Burrows:** "Just look, ya bloomin' idiot," Eleanor Rugglesby-Bobsyeruncle, the world-famous cockney art collector, screamed at her assistant, Ivan Ivanovich, illegitimate son of the Secret Czar, Ivanovichi, "ya packed me priceless Don Quixote paintin' in with a sack of bloody Spam, it was the darn cans tore me knight!"

## Best-Sellers

| | | POSITION LAST WEEK |
|---|---|---|
| **Fiction** | | |
| 1. | PILGRIM, Timothy Findley (4) | 3 |
| 2. | DARK LADY, Richard North Patterson (2) | 4 |
| 3. | BLACK NOTICE, Patricia Cornwell (5) | 2 |
| 4. | DEATH DU JOUR, Kathy Reichs (15) | 1 |
| 5. | THE OUTLANDISH COMPANION, Diana Gabaldon (10) | 5 |
| 6. | THE GIRLS' GUIDE TO HUNTING AND FISHING, Melissa Bank (5) | 10 |
| 7. | SUMMER GONE, David Macfarlane (1) | |
| 8. | CUBA, Stephen Coonts (2) | 8 |
| 9. | WHITE OLEANDER, Janet Fitch (16) | 6 |
| 10. | HANNIBAL, Thomas Harris (14) | 6 |
| **Nonfiction** | | |
| 1. | ENCORE PROVENCE, Peter Mayle (16) | 6 |
| 2. | THE OTHER SIDE AND BACK, Sylvia Browne (4) | 2 |
| 3. | NAME DROPPING, John Kenneth Galbraith (8) | 3 |
| 4. | BELLA TUSCANY, Frances Mayes (22) | 4 |
| 5. | DIANA IN SEARCH OF HERSELF, Sally Smith (1) | |
| 6. | THE FIRST WOLD WAR, John Keegan (2) | 7 |
| 7. | NOTES FROM EXILE, Clive Doucet (1) | |
| 8. | THE PROFESSOR AND THE MADMAN, Simon Winchester (3) | 1 |
| 9. | WALKING SINCE DAYBREAK, Moshe Einsteins (2) | 9 |
| 10. | THE LEXUS AND THE OLIVE TREE, Thomas Friedman (5) | 10 |

( ) Weeks on list *Compiled by Brian Bethune*

## Divine advice

**In North America's** sports-mad culture, anyone who doesn't share the passion may well be nonplussed by the jargon of co-workers or bosses. Women in particular, writes author Jean McCormick, need help cracking the workplace code, and she provides it in her *Talk Sports Like a Pro: 99 Secrets to Becoming a Sports Goddess* (Perigee). An authentic sports goddess herself, McCormick won seven Emmy Awards as a producer at the U.S. sports network ESPN. Her "secrets" are brisk, useful factoids for the core American games—what the abbreviations mean in a baseball box score, for instance—and very basic indeed for more esoteric sports. Hockey, McCormick writes, uses a puck—a "small black rubber object that is the equivalent of a ball."




# Passages



Fred Chartrand/CP Archive

*Mackasey*

**Died:** Former federal Liberal cabinet minister Bryce Mackasey, 78, in Montreal. Born in Quebec City, Mackasey won his first seat in federal politics in 1962. Six years later, he was appointed labour minister under prime minister **Pierre Trudeau**. In that position, Mackasey became best-known for implementing one of the most generous unemployment insurance programs in the Western world. He left the House of Commons in 1976 and won a seat in the Quebec legislature, but quit after two years, regaining a federal seat in 1980. In 1983, he was charged with, and cleared of, influence peddling. Mackasey retired from politics in 1984 and was appointed Canadian ambassador to Portugal, a decision that was reversed by the incoming prime minister, **Brian Mulroney**.

**Ailing:** World champion curler **Sandra Schmirler**, 36, with cancer; in Regina. Schmirler, who won an Olympic gold medal in 1998, underwent surgery last week.



Fred Chartrand/CP

*Dion, Angélil*

**Recovered:** René Angélil, 57, Celine Dion's husband, from throat cancer; in Montreal. Angélil was diagnosed last March and underwent surgery. Tests in July found no traces of the cancer.

**Died:** Sportscaster **René Lecavalier**, 81, the French-language NHL play-by-play announcer for Radio-Canada between 1952 and 1986; in Montreal.

**Won:** The U.S. Open doubles crown, by Canadian tennis player **Sebastien Lareau** and his Texan partner, **Alex O'Brien**, in Flushing Meadows, N.Y. Lareau is the first Canadian to win a Grand Slam tennis title at the senior level.

**Appointed:** Former federal cabinet minister **Marcel Masse**, 59, as Canadian executive director of the Inter-American Development Bank.

Explorer

## Proving the skeptics wrong

**Race organizers** call it "the regatta of possibilities." This week, more than 60 disabled sailors from around the world are meeting in Toronto to compete in the ninth annual Mobility Cup—an event made possible by a unique Canadian-designed boat, the Martin 16. The competitors include paraplegics, who have lost the use of their legs, and quadriplegics, who have no mobility below their necks. "We have people who can't talk or move," says Stephen Alvey, a Calgary-based marketing consultant and avid sailor who helped develop the boat and organize the regatta. "But they can sail."



*The Martin 16 sip-and-puff technology*

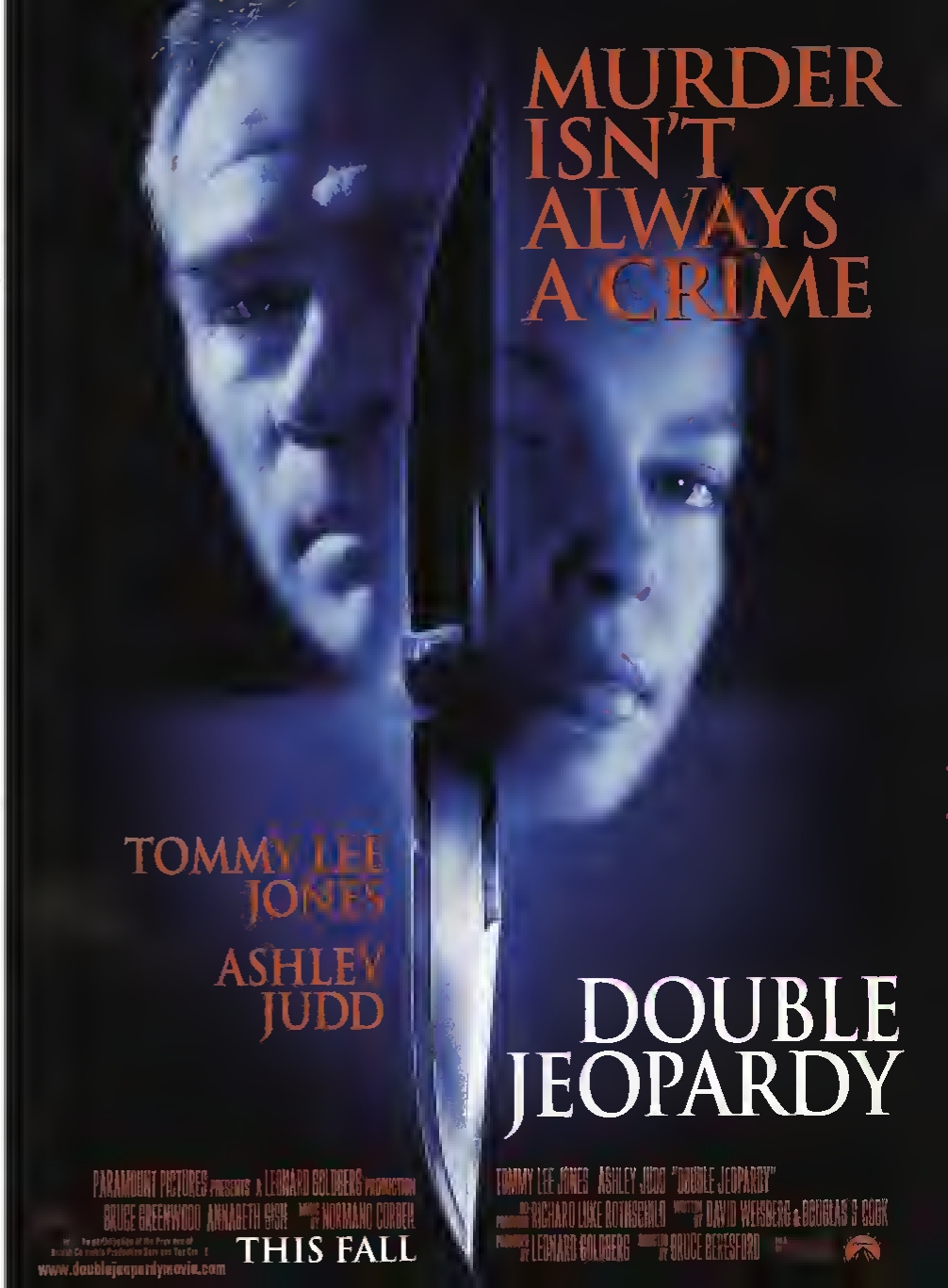
The five-metre-long vessel, designed by Vancouver boatbuilder Don Martin, has a single mast with two sails—and a number of unusual features to adapt the boat for the disabled. The keel, which is one metre deep, has a 150-kg lead bulb attached to it to prevent the boat from capsizing under any conditions. The sailor sits in a specially designed chair and can steer and trim the sails either manually or with a battery-powered system. Alvey says one of the biggest challenges was to develop so-called sip-and-puff technology that would enable quadriplegics to control the boat simply by breathing. He relied upon several technical experts to design a device that can be attached to a life jacket and connected to the battery. Using a straw, the sailor inhales or exhales to adjust the sails or turn the boat, and bites a switch to change functions. "Our goal was to put a quadriplegic in a boat and have him sail as well as you or I," says Alvey, who has friends who are disabled. "Everyone said it was impossible." The development of the Martin 16 and the growth of the Mobility Cup have proved them wrong.

## Selling Sega Dreamcast

**Last week,** Sega Enterprises Ltd. launched Dreamcast, its new home video-game console that company executives hope will become the No. 1 choice with video fans. To help them conquer the game world, Tokyo-based Sega launched the product with a $149-million North American marketing and advertising campaign. In Canada, the company is targeting audiences with a straightforward message: Dreamcast is the most powerful home game console available, with 15 times the computing and graphics capability of Sony PlayStation and 10 times as much as Nintendo 64. All that power, Sega predicts, will produce a commercial bonanza. At the beginning of the month, North American pre-launch sales had hit an unprecedented 300,000 units, smashing the record of 100,000 set by the Sony PlayStation in 1995. That led the company to predict that North American sales in the first 24 hours would hit $67 million, surpassing past home video-game launches. Sega premiered the console with 18 new games, which sell for an average of $60 to $70. And the company will release another 22 games just in time for Christmas shopping.

D'Arcy Jenish





Anthony Wilson-Smith

# Lunch with John Galbraith

**When it comes** to lunch with John Kenneth Galbraith, getting there *isn't* half the fun. The house where he, his elegant wife of 62 years, Kitty, and their family have spent most summers since 1947 lies atop a hill at the end of a bumpy dirt road in southern Vermont. The nearest municipality is too small to show up on most maps—and once there, another 11 km of hairpin turns await. But in typical Galbraith fashion, written directions are precise, crisp, and conclude: "Do not anywhere lose courage: you didn't really make a mistake." Also typically, the lunch prepared by Kitty is perfectly laid out, highlighted by a salad of greens she picked on their 250-acre estate.

Galbraith will be 91 in October, and for the man who has known every Democratic president since Franklin D. Roosevelt, a hearing aid and cane for walking are now standard accompaniments. He says he has "slowed a bit" by his standards—but his output remains prodigious. Officially retired, he keeps an office at Harvard University, and lectures regularly. He writes three hours a day, and ponders ideas and phrases "when I'm walking, or after I go to bed at night, or waking up in the morning."

After finishing *Name-Dropping*, his recently released, critically praised book of reminiscences, he has segued into a new project that dissects modern society in economic and philosophical terms. Galbraith says the book, to be called *The Economics of Innocent Fraud*, concerns "the sort of comfortable things that become belief because they advantage somebody." The process, he says, starts with "the renaming of the system. There is so much in the history of capitalism, from Marx to the Rockefellers, that the name has a slightly evil sound." So, he concludes, "we've shifted to a wholly meaningless designation called 'the market system,' which is totally bland, and somehow gives the impression that consumers are the dominant force."

That's classic Galbraith: even speaking spontaneously, he makes his case in perfectly formed sentences, leavened with a dash of outrage, a measure of cynicism and a dusting of historical reference. Those aren't traits shared by all in the farm community of Iona Station, Ont., where Galbraith grew up—and he remains aware how much one opportunity affected his life. As a graduate of the Ontario Agricultural College in Guelph in 1931, he was pondering options when the University of Southern California offered a scholarship. Without that, he would likely have stayed in Canada. With it, the choice "lay between a lifetime of heavy, monotonous toil on an Ontario farm, or a leisurely academic existence." It also meant choosing between being Canadian or American.

In 1937, with dual citizenship not yet possible, Galbraith became an American.

Since then, he has seldom been far from the centres of American political debate and power. His Harvard link, where he first met the Kennedys, began in the mid-1930s. (John F. Kennedy Jr. spoke at his 90th birthday party.) Galbraith ran the American price-controls board in the Second World War, was adviser to presidential candidate Adlai Stevenson in 1956, and did the same for John F. Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson and George McGovern. He is less close to Bill Clinton, but gets along well enough that he has been to Little Rock, Ark., as a Clinton guest.

Through all, Galbraith has remained an unabashed liberal, an unrepentant believer in the idea that government deficits aren't always bad, and an unrelenting critic of materialism. "The urge to consume," he wrote in *The Affluent Society* in 1958, "is fathered by the value system, which emphasizes the ability of the society to produce. The more that is produced, the more that must be owned in order to maintain the proper prestige." That theme runs through many of his 31 books. These days, with the American economy booming, Galbraith favours running a surplus rather than cutting taxes. Then, he would put money aside for "the day when there is unemployment, recession, and governments will need to borrow partly for welfare." Macroeconomic policy, Galbraith insists, "must be seen in cyclical terms."

**The same can be** said of Galbraith's influence. At his peak in the 1960s, he was one of the leaders of mainstream economic thinking. In the 1980s, his ideas lost currency. In the past decade, in books like *The Culture of Contentment* and his forthcoming work, he has used his place in the Democratic party to prod it to rethink existing ideas and revisit old ones. In June, Galbraith gave what he calls "my best-received speech ever" at the London School of Economics. Later, the text of "The Unfinished Business of the Century" was reprinted in newspapers around the world. At times funny, pointed and poignant, it ended with a plea to battle what he calls mankind's greatest challenges: the growing number of desperately poor people, and the need to eliminate nuclear weapons. We are, Galbraith said, "on the edge of a total end to civilized existence on the planet, perhaps of life itself."

Those aren't happy thoughts, but Galbraith is often as blunt as he is eloquent. Similarly, after a two-hour discussion in his study, Galbraith rises abruptly and says: "That's enough talking." He has that book to finish writing—and as always, he remains just as interested in what still lies ahead as in reflecting on the well-travelled road behind.





*Clarkson and Saul: an appointment that attracted both kudos and controversy*

Jean Marc Carisse/CP Photo

# Adrienne's Ottawa

## Will the new governor general settle for a ceremonial role?

**By Mary Janigan**

**It is the immigrants** who best grasp how difficult it is to be different in a new society—and how much ferocious will is required to succeed. In early 1942, fleeing the brutal Japanese invasion of Hong Kong, William and Ethel Poy and their two children settled into a cramped apartment in a seedy downtown Ottawa neighbourhood. The wealthy Poy had fought alongside the British army against the Japanese—and then managed to escape with his family, a tiny remnant of his fortune and five meagre suitcases. Life was tough.

Last week, as she made her debut as Canada's 26th governor general, Poy's daughter Adrienne Clarkson drew deft parallels between her own history as an Asian refugee huddled in wartime Ottawa amid the descendants of British and French settlers—and the 20th-century saga of the nation itself. "I'm very proud that the little town, which was covered in snow, white snow, full of white people in 1942, and to which our little family came, is now the kind of place in which I can take my role," the veteran broadcaster said, barely concealing a nervousness that surprised Ottawa insiders. "You couldn't have 79 different kinds of people on the street if it weren't Canada."

The appointment attracted both kudos and controversy—if only because Prime Minister Jean Chrétien reached beyond his circle of political partisans to anoint a highly opinionated and distinctly nontraditional representative of Canada's head of state, Queen Elizabeth II. When the investiture of the 60-year-old Clarkson takes place on Oct. 7 and she officially replaces former cabinet minister Roméo LeBlanc, she will be the first member of a visible minority to hold the position. Her 10-page official biography is crammed with an impressive list of awards, honorary degrees and careers including broadcaster, film director, diplomat and publisher. And she is only the second woman, after former cabinet minister Jeanne Sauvé, to occupy the post.

Perhaps most intriguingly, she comes as the official half of an unofficial viceregal pair: she recently married her longtime companion, the outspoken philosopher and writer John Ralston Saul. And Chrétien made no secret of his gleeful expectation that the two forceful personalities would bring political acumen, cultural flair and sheer love of country to their elegant residence in Rideau Hall. As Chrétien awkwardly explained: "I guess that over dinner they might between the two of them come up with a pretty good conclusion."

But strong opinions on everything from free trade (against) to public broadcasting (for) and equally strong determination could be a liability as well as a strength during Clarkson's five-year tenure. While she can be gracious and charming, she has also developed a reputation for her steely will—and high-handed behaviour. She and Saul *are* used to getting their own ways although they received variances to put additions on their

house in the tony Toronto neighbourhood of Yorkville in the late 1980s, they bitterly opposed their neighbours' request last year to fashion an addition. Along the way, they even managed to temporarily freeze *all* of their neighbours' renovations. The dispute was only settled when Clarkson accepted her new post.

In fact, within minutes of Chrétien's announcement a fierce ideological debate began raging: was Rideau Hall to be occupied by two left-wing, intensely nationalistic zealots or were they simply two confidently humane advocates of the new Canada? Had the Prime Minister played with Canada's future on the brink of another Quebec referendum on separation—or secured another force, in the proudly bilingual and bicultural pair, for its survival? "She is so proud to be a Canadian," maintains longtime friend Toronto lawyer William McMurtry. "She will probably attempt to go beyond the ceremonial to articulate the essence of the nation."

That brave approach may have its risks. Although the governor general must assume daunting responsibilities in times of constitutional crisis, the role has usually remained largely ceremonial. As an unelected representative, the sophisticated Clarkson must cut ribbons, entertain schoolchildren, endure numerous diplomatic dinners—and keep most of her strong opinions to herself. Last week, she deftly observed that "standing apart from the everyday political fray does not mean not having ideas." She added that she and Saul will probably said more than they thought they were going to say." He adds pointedly: "That included her ability to know when to keep quiet."



CP Photo

*At the fifth estate with co-hosts Ian Parker (left) and Eric Malling, in 1972 (right), goal-driven and poised*



Steve G. Mitchell

Clearly, Chrétien had no worries on that score. Last week, he told reporters he first thought of appointing Clarkson more than two years ago. But other candidates were also in the wings. *Maclean's* has learned that Foreign Affairs Minister Lloyd Axworthy was approached—but preferred his current role. Chrétien's longtime political friend Deputy Prime Minister Herb Gray could have had the job if he had wanted it. Former British Columbia cabinet minister Iona Campagnolo was also briefly in the running.

Chrétien seriously considered Alberta Senator Joyce Fairbairn. When the Liberals were left without any Nova Scotia MPs after the 1997 election, she resigned from her cabinet position as government leader in the Senate to open up a ministerial seat for a Nova Scotia senator. The Prime Minister felt that he owed her—and that the veteran political aide would be an asset in any campaign against Quebec separation. But Fairbairn's French-language skills are poor. And some advisers warned that Chrétien had sparked enough outcry when he appointed the avidly partisan LeBlanc in 1994, evoking charges that he had reduced the post to a patronage plum.

Earlier this year, key members of Chrétien's team floated the candidacy of former Ontario premier Bob Rae, brother of Chrétien's close adviser John Rae, an executive at Montreal-based Power Corp. of Canada. That was too much for many party loyalists: they did not want a New Democrat in the job. Meanwhile, women in the Liberal caucus said it was time for another female. Chrétien ran Clarkson's name past his tiny inner circle, including policy director Chaviva Hosek and former appointments director Penny Collenette. "She is a visible minority and a woman and she did a diplomatic stint in Paris," says a key insider recounting Chrétien's considerations. "She is held in high regard by the arts and academic communities. There is no taint of political affiliation. She carries herself with dignity."

## Clarkson will be the first member of a visible minority to hold the position

eventually present those "ethical" ideas, perhaps on such topics as public education. Saul was equally optimistic that he would only need to temper "about one per cent" of his activities to protect his spouse from controversy.

Opinions of those optimistic assessments are mixed. One acquaintance says that Clarkson will be fine. Saul, the acquaintance adds, "will get into trouble if there is another free-trade debate, there will be no stopping him." Others worry that both Clarkson and Saul lack the ability to reach out to ordinary Canadians. "I relate to warm people—and that just isn't her," frets a key political insider. "Politically it will wash—because of the categories—but with any public enthusiasm? No."

Their longtime friend Toronto lawyer Julian Porter counters that Clarkson will dazzle her audiences. "She is a magnificent performer—and that is a huge part of the job," he says. Veteran television producer Ron Haggart, who worked with her on the CBC's investigative TV show *the fifth estate*, adds: "She had the ability to put people at ease, such that they

In short, she was viewed as the near-perfect solution: the PMO needed to put a modern spin on a job that many Canadians view as an anachronism—and required a fast learner for a role that is clearly in transition. And Clarkson *is* a fast learner: even in high school, she could memorize a 15-minute speech in 15 minutes. Back then, both parents fostered their immigrant dreams for their children: they encouraged them to excel in school—and to fit gracefully into their new country's elite. Clarkson's brother, Neville Poy, retired in 1995 after a stellar career as a Toronto plastic surgeon, often working with burn victims. (Chrétien appointed *his* wife, Vivienne, a former fashion designer, to the Senate last year.) Clarkson herself was equally driven. At Ottawa's Lisgar Collegiate Institute in 1955-1956, she was head girl, a member of the girls' club, which did everything from performing concerts to assisting needy families—*and* an accomplished public speaker. "Undoubtedly Lisgar's busiest person," lauded the yearbook.

Her path seemed golden. She took her bachelor of arts degree in English literature and language at the University of Toronto's Trinity College, then a master's in English literature at the University of Toronto. From 1962 to 1964, she did postgraduate work at the prestigious Sorbonne in France, polishing her French-language skills. It was in Paris that she became reacquainted with a Toronto friend, academic Stephen Clarkson, scion of a wealthy old-Toronto family. In 1963, they wed. By the early 1970s, she was the budding star of an afternoon TV interview show, *Take Thirty*, the author of two novels, the mother of three daughters (two of them twins) and a magazine columnist. While her counterculture contemporaries dropped out of society, she worked ferociously hard to drop in. Impeccably and expensively dressed, cultured and carefully contained, she was the very embodiment of an immigrant success story.

And then it all fell apart. One of the twins died of sudden infant death syndrome. Reeling, Clarkson worked even harder. In the mid-1970s, her marriage to Clarkson disintegrated. After a bitter divorce action, he took custody of the girls. Friends say that Adrienne rarely, if ever, sees them. To this day, her official biography and *Canadian Who's Who* entry make no reference to her children. "It's the huge wound in her life," says a close friend. The damage was profound. Although she has been with Saul for almost two decades, she vowed never to remarry. The pair only wed this summer in response to the PMO's gentle hints.

Clarkson has always pushed her learning curve—and occasionally her colleagues—to the limit. Goal-driven, she can be brutally demanding. Poised and aloof, she can be arrogant. But she has always been toughest on herself, grasping new challenges with cocky assurance. From 1976 to 1982, she was an investigative journalist. After a hard-hitting look at the New Brunswick McCain family's business practices, one senator actually accused her of being an unnaturalized Canadian for most of her life. (The Poy family became citizens in 1949.) From 1982 to 1987, she served as Ontario's agent-general in Paris, promoting the province's business and cultural interests. On her return, she rashly accepted a job as president of the McClelland and Stewart publishing house—even though she had little experience in that complicated business. Overwhelmed, she returned to the CBC in 1988 as a host of cultural programs, most recently of *Something Special*.

Meanwhile, she and Saul have fashioned what they always craved: interesting lives. They own a small, cherished island in Georgian Bay, where they spend much of their summers in a rustic, tastefully appointed retreat. They are avid gardeners. Their circle of friends is cultured, life is well lived. How the pair will survive the transition to Rideau Hall depends on how willing they are to adjust to that life.



Frank Lennon/Toronto Star Pix

*Clarkson: bringing political acumen, cultural flair and a love of country to Rideau Hall*

But if others, as well as Clarkson, have sometimes paid a price for her ferocious will, Canadians may also become the beneficiaries of that iron resolve. Friends believe that Clarkson and Saul could transform Canada's highest office into a sparkling bicultural Camelot where even the magnificent gardens receive more attention. The couple intend to alternate time between Rideau Hall and the governor general's residence in Quebec City, honouring the achievements of their fellow Canadians and urging them to celebrate their heritage as a multicultural nation that *works*. "We always had this strong feeling in ourselves that we would do well and succeed," Clarkson once mused. "Our parents put their whole life into that and when you have that kind of push, you have to go straight up. There was no other way."

*With John Nicol in Toronto*

# Pomp and ceremony

## The governor general could exercise real powers

By Patricia Chisholm

**When Adrienne Clarkson** is sworn in as the Queen's representative in Canada on Oct. 7, there will be enough pomp and ceremony to satisfy the staunchest monarchist. The spectacle, replete with honour guard and horse-drawn landau—not to mention exotic hats—will evoke the ties to Queen Elizabeth, who continues to perform her role as Canada's head of state. And while Canada is in all other respects a modern democracy, Canadians seem content to retain this last vestige of colonialism. That is probably because a governor general's tenure is almost entirely taken up with the duties of a figurehead: greeting heads of state, bestowing honours and throwing lavish parties. "The monarchy is not a big issue here because we have more important things to worry about, like whether the country is going to fall apart," points out Peter Russell, a retired professor of political science at the University of Toronto.



Jim Young/CP Photo

*LeBlanc with his wife, Diana Fowler-LeBlanc, respect*

But while the governor general has played no significant political role in Canadian government for decades, that could change. If, for instance, an election resulted in a hung Parliament, or Quebecers voted for sovereignty, a crisis of leadership could occur requiring the governor general's intervention. In either case, a person expected simply to perform ceremonial duties might be called upon to resolve fundamental questions about who will govern, and how. "We just can't predict what might happen and what difficulties might arise," says Patrick Monahan, a constitutional law expert at Osgoode Hall Law School in Toronto. "Not modernizing this institution is like waiting for the house to burn down and then buying insurance."

The problem, Monahan says, is that the governor general's discretionary powers—though very rarely used—are extremely broad. As the Queen's representative, the governor general can take action to affect the formation of a government, the transition from one government to another, or the dissolution of Parliament. In Monahan's view, a person with such sweeping authority should be democratically chosen, rather than relying on the whim of a prime minister. Constitutional change of the type currently being debated in Australia—Aussies go to the polls on Nov. 6 to vote on whether or not to become a republic—is not the answer, he says, since he believes it would be too difficult to achieve consensus in Canada.

But two simpler measures could help. Monahan recommends reducing the governor general's broad legal powers. In addition, the selection process should be revised so that, at the very least, the appointment is approved by the leader of the Opposition. "A person who gets the job as an act of patronage has no legitimacy in a democratic society to make decisions that would actually affect people's lives," he says.

Others say that the current system can work just fine, as long as selections are prudently made. That means avoiding political cronies who may have few real qualifications for the job—a criticism that was levelled at Roméo LeBlanc, the departing governor general who was a Liberal cabinet minister under Pierre Trudeau. Richard Johnston, a political scientist at the University of British Columbia, says that, with the exception of the Queen, he has no great respect for the Royal Family. But when appointments are wisely made—as he believes Clarkson's was—the governor general can play a symbolic role by representing Canada's linguistic and ethnic diversity. "If we elected this person," he says, "they would probably always be a middle-aged male of Scottish ancestry."

At least one former holder of the office believes the post still serves many valuable functions. Ray Hnatyshyn, a minister of justice in the Mulroney government and governor general from 1990 to 1995, says having a nonpartisan governor general who is separate from the politics of decision-making makes it easier for Canadians to wave the flag, regardless of how they feel about the prime minister. And while the time demands of the office can be relentless—"I don't think anyone realizes how busy it is until they get there"—he adds that it can also be deeply rewarding. "It's a unique opportunity to celebrate excellence," says Hnatyshyn, now a prominent Ottawa lawyer. In a country still grappling with the unity issue, that job may never have been more important. m







*Romanow (centre) with Hermanson (left) and Liberal Leader Jim Melenchuk: the path to power*

# A case of Prairie pragmatism

## The NDP looks for votes in the middle of the road

**By Brian Bergman**

**Saskatchewan Premier** Roy Romanow once joked that his destiny was "to give Saskatchewan people the Liberal government they always wanted." For one of the most successful New Democratic Party politicians in recent memory, the remark was a sly reference to Romanow's ability to tack left or right as the political winds demand—much in the manner of the perpetually ruling Liberals in Ottawa. Last week, as he sailed towards what was widely expected to be a third consecutive majority government in the Sept. 16 provincial election, Romanow was proving once again that, in Canada, riding the middle ground is often the surest path to power. "What we have here is what I like to call a new style of social democracy for the new world," Romanow told *Maclean's* during a break from campaigning in Regina. "We've had to square the circle by developing a movement that is honest to the principles of Tommy Douglas, but able to respond to the new global forces of change."

In neighbouring Manitoba, another veteran NDP leader is trying to lift a page from the Romanow playbook. Throughout the campaign leading up to the Sept. 21 Manitoba election, Gary Doer has promoted himself as the leader of "today's NDP"—a not-so-subtle attempt to dissociate himself from the tax-and-spend image that has often plagued his party. Doer, who has led the NDP through 11 years in opposition, is striving to convince voters that the party is far more business-friendly and fiscally responsible than it has sometimes appeared in the past. The effort seems to be paying off. Recent public opinion polls show Doer in a neck-and-neck race with three-term Conservative Premier Gary Filmon, while the provincial Liberals lag a distant third.

The NDP's Prairie pragmatism has led to some intriguing role reversals in the two election campaigns. Romanow's high standing among voters is, in large part, due to his success in leading the province out of the financial morass created in the 1980s by former premier Grant Devine's free-spending Conservative government. Doer, meanwhile, is keeping his election promises small and inexpensive while erstwhile deficit fighter Filmon is offering voters a tantalizing $1 billion in tax cuts and new spending initiatives.

Beyond such ironies, though, the two elections are quite separate contests, propelled by very different political dynamics. In Saskatchewan, Romanow has benefited mightily from a badly splintered and inexperienced opposition. The Tories, driven from office in 1991 after running up an annual $842-million deficit, were further demoralized by criminal corruption charges laid against more than 15 MLAs and party workers who served under Devine. The party formally folded its tent in 1997, giving rise to the Saskatchewan Party, an amalgam of former Tory and disaffected Liberal MLAs. While Saskatchewan Party Leader Elwin Hermanson, a feisty farmer and ex-Reform MP, is making inroads in rural Saskatchewan, his campaign has been plagued by a series of rookie gaffes. Perhaps the most embarrassing: public statements by Ontario-based ad executive and party consultant Brian Thomas that the Saskatchewan Party was testing attack ads in an attempt to get inside of "the wee little heads" of voters. The party abruptly fired Thomas, saying it could not accept the inference that Saskatchewan residents were stupid.

An Angus Reid Group poll released last week showed Romanow's NDP enjoying the support of 47 per cent of decided voters, compared with 35 per cent for the Saskatchewan Party and 14 per cent for the Liberals. A raucous leaders' debate held last week did little to shift public opinion, with the Saskatchewan Party leader striking some observers as particularly strident. "Mr. Hermanson needs to establish his bona fides," says University of Saskatchewan political scientist David Smith. "You can't do that by trying to shout down the other guy."

The tone—if not always the content—of debate has been a little more civil in Manitoba. Filmon entered the 35-day campaign hobbled by the taint of scandal. An independent inquiry confirmed last March that five senior Conservatives, including the premier's own chief of staff, had conspired to recruit and fund independent native candidates in the 1995 provincial election in an attempt to divert votes from the NDP. The same Tories later engaged in a coverup. The inquiry accepted Filmon's assertion that he had no prior knowledge of the plot or the coverup.

Since he couldn't change the facts, Filmon tried to change the subject. The wily premier dominated the early stages of the campaign by issuing a promise a day, which, when tallied up, amounted to an eye-catching $1-billion price tag. Calling it his 50-50 plan, Filmon vowed to chop provincial taxes by $500 million and increase spending in key areas such as health care and education by another $500 million—all the while balancing the budget.

It was an uncharacteristically bold move for Filmon who, during 11 years in power, cautiously reined in spending and offered only modest tax cuts. According to University of Manitoba political scientist Paul Thomas, Filmon's election strategy carries both potential rewards and risks. The chief reward—in the form of a rare fourth term in office—will come if Filmon is correct in assuming that the voters, after years of fiscal restraint, are ready for a little relief. The main risk, adds Thomas, is if "he has gone overboard and promised more than what people find credible. One of the main reasons for public cynicism about politicians is their habit of over-promising and under-delivering."

While Filmon's election promises have grabbed headlines, the vote-rigging scandal continues to haunt him. During a provincially televised CBC leaders' debate last week, moderator Diana Swain asked the premier why Manitobans should believe he would surround himself with honest people if re-elected. Filmon, who often looked testy and uncomfortable during the hour-long debate, once again expressed his personal dismay over the way some of his closest aides had deceived him, which he compared to betrayal by an adulterous spouse. While Filmon said he had taken steps to make sure it would never happen again, Doer, for one, wasn't letting him off the hook. He accused the premier of "a complete abdication of leadership."



*Manitoba's Filmon (left) running neck and neck with the New Democrats*

Doer later told *Maclean's* that voter cynicism over the vote-rigging scandal "is the sleeping tiger at the doorstep. Mr. Filmon's view that it's behind him is not true." But political analysts caution the NDP leader against playing that card too heavily. After so many years in opposition, says Thomas, the biggest knock against Doer is the perception that he is unrelentingly negative. It is a view Filmon is eager to propagate. "Manitobans have had enough of the mudslinging of Mr. Doer," the premier declared during last week's debate. "They want somebody who has a plan for the future, who doesn't just criticize the other guy's plan." With the election clock ticking, the mud may be just starting to fly from all directions.

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## Bruce Wallace

# A Liberal showdown

**Unless there is a** pollster on the phone ruining their evening with a bunch of questions about politics, most Canadians probably don't spend much time thinking about whether Jean Chrétien should run for a third term. The Prime Minister has made it his business to stay out of their business, so it is easy to see why Canadians are mystified at the obsession inside Ottawa with the question of Chrétien's future. But it's there. The subject overwhelms everything else in federal politics. It is the uninvited presence wherever Liberals gather, the filter through which Chrétien's every act, every announcement is seen and interpreted. Appoint a new governor general, as the Prime Minister did last week, and he is immediately asked if this will be the last one he will ever name. The fascination may not stir many Canadians, but it is the pivot on which national politics turns these days. And the spinning is about to accelerate.

The Prime Minister has done a marvellous job in recent months sowing confusion among those who want him to quit. Paul Martin's supporters have waited cautiously throughout this second Chrétien term, minding their tongues and keeping their organization idling without overheating. They have always assumed Chrétien would be gone or on his way by the first summer of the new millennium. Of course, Chrétien will insist he's staying until the day he actually goes, they concede. He remembers the chaos that followed Lester Pearson's early retirement announcement in 1967, all those tipped-over chairs as cabinet ministers rushed for the exits to fire up leadership campaigns.

But Chrétien has become so effective, so *natural* at insisting he will run again that the Martin people are starting to wonder if he maybe, truly, means it. Furthermore, if Chrétien is simply sticking around to see if another Quebec referendum comes along that needs fighting, that could leave the timing of the next Liberal leadership in Lucien Bouchard's hands. Not the kind of thoughts for a good night's sleep in the Martin camp.

So the Martin Liberals are itchy. And there is growing chatter among them that perhaps the time has come for Paul to stop playing the role of the dutiful dauphin. What has it done for Prince Charles, anyway? There are hints, for the first time, that Martin may be readying for a showdown with the boss. The Martin Liberals returned from the party's summer caucus retreat in Halifax muttering that Chrétien had come down openly on the side of the big spenders. And they professed alarm at the way Chrétien has taken to sneering at the brain drain as a big-business plot, and tax cuts as a rich man's issue. Tax cuts, say the Martin camp, are everybody's issue now.

A clash may come as early as the throne speech, expected to be delivered in mid-October, when the extent of Chrétien's new sympathy for more federal spending should become clearer. The Prime Minister's advisers insist they will stay a moderate course, promising to mix some tax cuts with some new spending (they laugh off reports of a $15-billion national day care plan as childish). But August's cabinet shuffle did put a more interventionist veneer on the government. One reason Chrétien shifted Pierre Pettigrew out of the human resources portfolio was because, as a Martin loyalist, he was seen as too reluctant to push the finance minister to loosen the strings on social spending.

Unlike Martin, the Liberal left is in no hurry for Chrétien to leave. Contenders—especially Allan Rock—need time to catch Martin, and they would become Dobermans for the Prime Minister should Martin attack. And if a collision occurs, Martin may find out that while his political positioning puts him in a good place to carry the country in a general election, it is a much harder place from which to capture the Liberal party.



### Gardens for sale

Toronto's venerable Maple Leaf Gardens will be put up for sale. In making the announcement, Maple Leafs president Ken Dryden said the historic site has lost more than $1 million since the Leafs moved to their new arena, the Air Canada Centre, in February.

### Ruling against discrimination

The Supreme Court of Canada ruled that an aerobics test that kept Tawney Meiorin of British Columbia from continuing to work as a forest firefighter was discriminatory. In its unanimous judgment, the Supreme Court said the stringent test, which Meiorin failed after more than two years on the job, did not take into account the physiological differences between men and women.

### A licence revoked

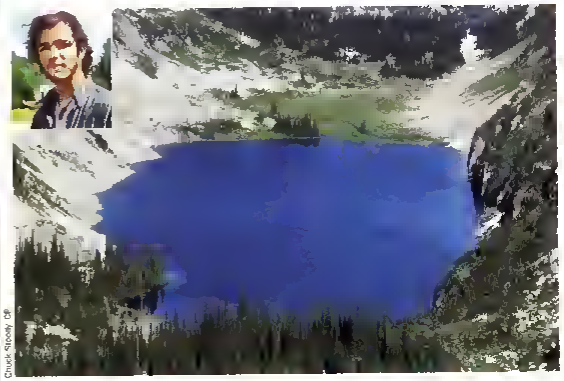
The Canadian Coast Guard revoked the exploration licence of the Alcyone, the research vessel of the late French undersea expert Jacques Cousteau (it replaced the renowned Calypso). The move came after complaints that the crew, which was filming a documentary on whales in the St. Lawrence River, harassed and even injured the animals.

### Regan redux

Former Nova Scotia premier Gerald Regan, 70, who was acquitted last year of several sex-related charges, could be headed back to court. Last week, the Nova Scotia Court of Appeal overturned a stay of proceedings on nine indecent assault charges. Regan's lawyer, Edward Greenspan, said that he will appeal the decision to the Supreme Court of Canada if the Crown decides to proceed.

### Closing the books

Military investigators said they were ending their investigation into the case of Ann Margaret Dickey. The 26-year-old woman says that in 1996, as a Canadian Forces recruit, she was the victim of a series of sexual assaults at boot camp near Montreal. But military spokesmen said they found no evidence to support Dickey's allegations.



Chuck Stoody, CP

## An end to the search for Michel Trudeau

**British Columbia's Kokanee Lake will likely be the final resting place of Michel Trudeau after the RCMP called off an underwater search for his body. The 23-year-old son of former prime minister Pierre Trudeau and Margaret Kemper died last November after being swept into the 100-m-deep lake by an avalanche. Authorities said his body probably rests in an unaccessible area.**

## 'I believe him to be a man of his word'

**German-Canadian** businessman Karlheinz Schreiber left jail after a bipartisan effort to help raise his $1.2-million bail. Stepping forward to support the lobbyist were Elmer Mackay, a former Conservative cabinet minister, and Marc Lalonde, a Liberal minister under Pierre Trudeau. Both men pledged $100,000 towards bail for Schreiber, who was arrested on Aug. 31 at the request of German authorities investigating him for allegedly failing to pay $21 million in taxes on $38 million in undeclared income.

Lalonde represented Schreiber as a lawyer when the businessman was trying to set up an armoured-vehicle plant in Nova Scotia in the 1980s. Mackay, as a Nova Scotia cabinet minister, backed the project. At Schreiber's bail hearing, Ontario Superior Court Judge David Humphrey was hesitant to release him, at the time of his arrest, Schreiber had been well-prepared for flight, with an emergency kit that included blankets, a compass, a Swiss army knife, German and Canadian passports, and more than $30,000 in nine currencies. But Mackay said he had no doubt Schreiber would appear at his extradition hearing, adding: "I believe him to be a man of his word."

## The human influx continues

**Canadian authorities** on the West Coast intercepted a ship filled with more than 150 illegal immigrants from China—the fourth such incident since mid-July (an immigration official said two other ships likely made it to British Columbia in early July without being detected). Last week, Foreign Affairs Minister Lloyd Axworthy said the Chinese government is co-operating with Canada in an effort to stop the illegal smuggling. Ottawa also said it would investigate complaints that earlier arrivals were mistreated by RCMP officers at a detention camp.

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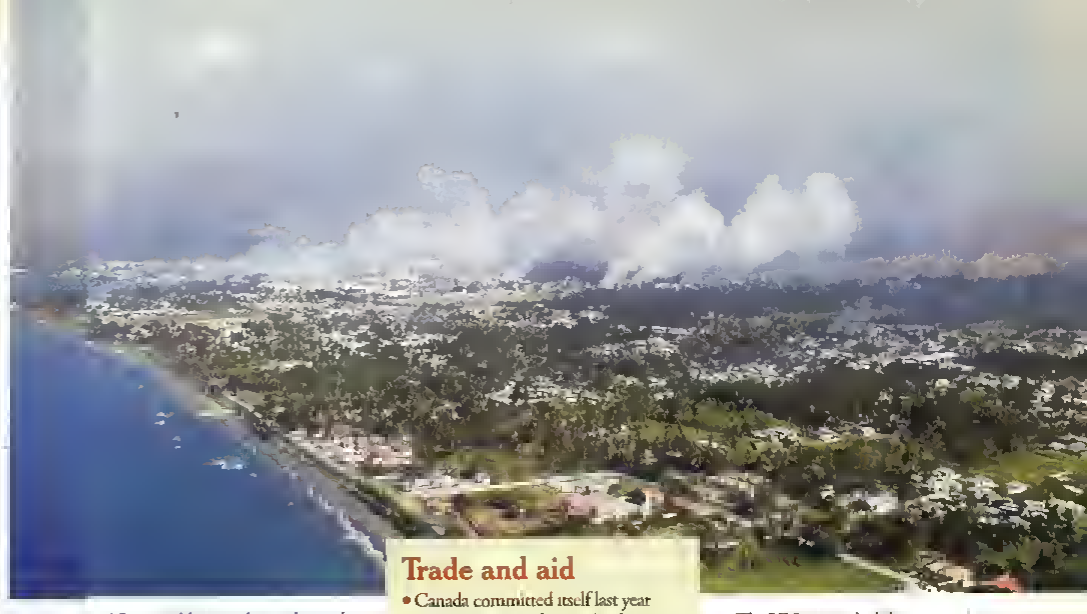
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# Reprisal in East Timor



*The smouldering, almost-deserted capital; soldier with militiamen (opposite); no foreign intervention*

AP Photo/Reed

## Trade and aid

- Canada committed itself last year to $280 million in financial aid to Indonesia, mainly in the form of export credits used to buy food
- Imports from Indonesia increased to $921 million in 1998 from $627 million in 1996
- One of the largest Canadian companies in Indonesia is Inco Ltd. of Toronto, which operates the giant Soroako nickel mine on the island of Sulawesi

**By Warren Caragata** in Jakarta

**First came the assurances.** Indonesian military officials visited the seaside compound of Roman Catholic Bishop Carlos Belo in the East Timor capital of Dili early last week, telling Belo—and the thousands of refugees who had crowded into the bishop's spacious garden seeking his protection—they would be safe from attack by rampaging pro-Jakarta militias. Just hours later, without warning, the assurance of sanctuary disappeared as gunmen attacked the compound. "They were firing automatic weapons and throwing Molotov cocktails," an eyewitness told

Gunmen terrorize Indonesia's province after its overwhelming vote to separate



*Maclean's*: "Everyone was screaming, shouting and crying, 'Bishop, Bishop, help us.' "

Belo, powerless to stem the bloodbath that engulfed the tiny half-island of East Timor last week, fled to Australia. By the end of the week, so had all but about 80 members of the United Nations mission that had pledged to stay by the side of the East Timorese if they voted—as they did, by an overwhelming 79 per cent—to separate from Indonesia in an Aug. 30 referendum. Dili, normally a city of 100,000, lay looted and burning, all but deserted except for the anti-independence militiamen—strongly suspected to be organized and armed by the Indonesian military—and by the soldiers themselves, ostensibly there to bring about order.

UN officials estimated that 200,000 of East Timor's 800,000 people had fled or had been forcibly removed to neighbouring Indonesian West Timor—and that possibly as many as 7,000 more had been murdered. Heads severed by machetes were on display on tall spikes in Dili, a chilling signal to the people of East Timor, and other separatist groups within the sprawling, ethnically diverse Indonesian archipelago, that their struggles for independence will be resisted. "There is arson and looting and shots can be heard on the streets," said Brig.-Gen. Togar Sianipar, a police spokesman. "It is chaos." To outside observers, the comparisons to the ethnic cleansing that devastated the Serbian province of Kosovo as the international community pondered its options early this year became tragically obvious. All week, Indonesia rebuffed pressures for an international force to intercede to stop the terror, insisting it had matters in hand.

At UN headquarters in New York City, and at a 21-nation Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation summit in New Zealand, East Timor dominated discussions. In Auckland, seven countries stepped forward to form a so-called Coalition of the Willing to help restore peace. Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia, Britain, the Philippines and Portugal all gave firm commitments to join any UN-mandated peacekeeping force in East Timor—but were clearly reluctant to commit troops against Indonesia's wishes. Their caution only increased as rumours spread in Jakarta of an impending military coup, raising fears that the government of President B. J. Habibie could fall, taking with it the country's fledgling experiment with democracy. One scenario had Gen. Wiranto, the soft-spoken, strong-willed defence minister and army chief of staff, heading a ruling triumvirate. But even as Habibie abruptly abandoned plans to attend the APEC forum in New Zealand, Indonesian authorities insisted his government was secure.

The international community had clear warnings that violence would ensue if the referendum went in favour of independence. Kerry Pither, spokesman for the East Timor Alert Network, an Ottawa-based lobby group, alerted Canadian Embassy officials in Jakarta in August after she and a small group of Canadians toured East Timor on a fact-finding mission. "Everywhere we went people told us they would vote for independence," she said last week. "But they also said they would be killed if peacekeepers were not sent in."

**No one seemed exempt** from the bloody backlash. In the southern town of Suai, a stronghold for the militias, gunmen attacked a church where refugees took shelter. In the northern coastal city of Baucau, they besieged a local monastery. Injured, Bishop Basilio Nascimento joined thousands of others fleeing into the mountains for an uncertain refuge. In Dili, rampaging crowds sacked the offices of the Red Cross.

The UN mission's ability to monitor the situation deteriorated quickly. By midweek, its staff was hunkered in a single compound, along with 2,500 terrified East Timorese. On Thursday, the military allowed several trucks to replenish the compound with food and water, but in the absence of assurances for their safety, more than half of the East Timorese crept out under cover of darkness to seek safety in the hills. On Friday, the British head of the mission, Ian Martin, boarded a truck to the airport and a flight to Australia, leaving only a skeleton crew behind. Within minutes, as soldiers watched, men with hand grenades arrived to menace the remaining contingent and 1,000 terrified people taking refuge there. Militiamen were looting and destroying United Nations vehicles in a lot beside the compound.

To the pro-independence movement, the prospect of a complete UN withdrawal was frightening. Arsenio Ramos-Horta, younger brother of Jose Ramos-Horta, a prominent independence activist who shared the 1996 Nobel Peace Prize with Belo, told *Maclean's* that if the United Nations pulls out, "it would be the death sentence for East Timor." As of last week, the independence movement's Fretilin guerrillas remained in their mountain hideouts. In Jakarta, Xanana Gusmao, a leader of the independence forces who was captured in 1992 and freed from house arrest last week, issued assurances that the guerrillas would not join the fighting. "They are determined," he said, "not to make any gesture which could be seen as waging civil war"—and provoking a harsher crackdown. Said Canada's ambassador in



*A mother and day-old baby seek refuge in the UN compound: after a referendum, anarchy*

H.T. Lee-Melou ne Agip/Reuters

Jakarta, Ken Sunquist. "It must be difficult to watch your brothers being killed."

Until last week's carnage, more people had died this year in another challenge to the Indonesian federation—in the long-standing unrest in the northern Sumatra province of Aceh, where separatists want to create a fundamentalist Muslim state. Anti-Indonesian feelings also run high in Irian Jaya, the western half of New Guinea, which Indonesia annexed in 1969. As well, clashes in Ambon, part of the country's Moluccas Islands, are partly motivated by local Christian opposition to Muslim migration from Java. Activists from Aceh and Irian Jaya demanded their own independence referendums, but are unlikely to get them. Jakarta, says Christopher Dagg, an Indonesia expert at Simon Fraser University in Burnaby, B.C., sees the two provinces as "an integral part of the country." And unlike impoverished East Timor, they are rich in resources, including gas and oil.

**While the world** sympathizes with the plight of East Timor, said Sunquist, most countries have no desire to see Indonesia split apart. The world's most populous Muslim nation, Indonesia is a key Asian supplier of raw materials including oil, copper and nickel. It also sits astride trade routes linking the Pacific and Indian oceans. For the rest of the world, says Dagg, "political and commercial interests are at stake." Early in the crisis, U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright appeared ready to invoke the so-called Clinton doctrine that emerged from the Kosovo crisis—that troops should be sent in to stop genocide wherever it occurs. At week's end, President Bill Clinton suspended U.S. military sales to Jakarta in an attempt to secure Indonesia's agreement to an international peacekeeping force. "Because we bombed Kosovo does not mean we should bomb Dili," said White House security adviser Sandy Berger. "Indonesia is undergoing a fragile political and economic transformation." An outraged Jose Ramos-Horta made his disappointment clear. "The West bombed Serbia back to the Stone Age in the name of human rights," said the Nobel laureate. "Now what is to be the fate of East Timor?"

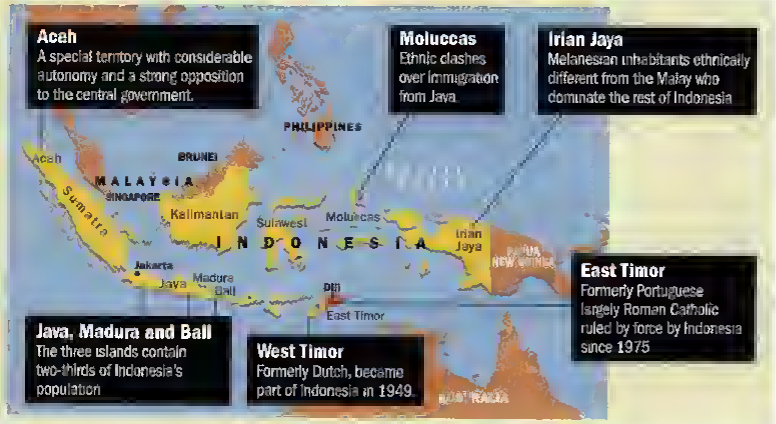
That left the prospect of economic sanctions against Indonesia, which Axworthy and other international leaders said were still under discussion. Officials at the World Bank said Jakarta's handling of East Timor could affect its access to the $1.8 billion that the financial agency is scheduled to lend Indonesia this year. "People are right in demanding that something be done," said Axworthy, "but the question is what is in the realm of possibilities now."

East Timor independence activist Pither says the answer is simple. Ottawa should immediately drop a $280-million aid package it agreed to last year, and stop all commercial dealings with Indonesia. Although Canada suspended military shipments to that country last year, Walter Dorn, a Canadian expert on Indonesian affairs at Cornell University, says he believes Canadian-made weapons may still be getting through. The events in East Timor have put profound pressures on global support for a strong, unified Indonesia. "I do not think the world can turn a blind eye," said Ambassador Sunquist. Clearly, it will take more than sympathy to help the East Timorese in their quest for independence.

*With Andrew Phillips in Washington, Tom Fennell in Toronto and Luke Fisher in Ottawa*

## Straining at the Seams

Indonesian strongman Suharto used an iron fist to keep his ethnically diverse country together during his 32 years in power. But the country's economic collapse, which forced the dictator from power in May, 1998, has unleashed separatist forces across the 17,508-island nation of 213 million.




## Palestinians freed

In keeping with a newly reached land-for-security deal, Israel released 199 Palestinian prisoners, the first of 350 to be freed by Oct. 8. Under the interim agreement, Israel also handed over seven per cent of the West Bank to Palestinian civilian rule and will join Palestinians in new negotiations for a peace pact beginning this week.

## Bradley makes it official

Bill Bradley, a former Hall of Fame basketball player with the New York Knicks and three-term senator from New Jersey, officially joined the race for the Democratic party presidential nomination. With a strong support team and impressive funding, Bradley is the lone challenger to Vice-President Al Gore.

## Clashes in Kosovo

An exploding grenade and flying rocks injured 15 French soldiers and police officers as the peacekeepers separated clashing Serbs and Albanians in the tense, ethnically mixed town of Kosovska Mitrovica. The two groups, who live on opposite sides of the Ibar River, have clashed constantly on a bridge joining their areas.

## Ulster disagreement

Spokesmen for Northern Ireland's unionist majority vowed to resist proposals to reform the British province's police force. Former Hong Kong governor Chris Patten, chairman of an international commission, released a report calling for the force to be made more acceptable to the Catholic minority by, among other things, changing its name from the Royal Ulster Constabulary to the Northern Ireland Police Service.

## Fall of a cabinet member

Pleading guilty to one misdemeanour count of lying to the FBI about payments he made to a former mistress, former Clinton cabinet housing secretary Henry Cisneros agreed to pay a $15,000 fine. At the same time, an 18-count felony indictment against him was dropped, ending a four-year, $15-million investigation by an independent counsel.





Eulogia Ortiz/AP

## Devastation and deliverance in Greece

**Rescuers pulled more than 80 people from the ruins after the strongest earthquake to hit Athens in nearly a century left at least 106 dead and another 16 missing. Volunteers from Turkey, Greece's traditional rival, helped dig through the rubble. Greece was quick to provide aid to western Turkey after an Aug. 17 earthquake there killed more than 15,000 people.**

## Bin Laden blamed in Moscow blast

**Moscow officials suspect** millionaire Saudi Arabian terrorist Osama bin Laden may have been responsible for an explosion that destroyed a nine-storey Moscow apartment building, killing at least 91 people and burying dozens more under a pile of rubble. It happened during new offensives by Islamic rebels based in the lawless, autonomous state of Chechnya who may be receiving funds from bin Laden. In recent weeks, the rebels have crossed into the Russian territory of Dagestan and seized several villages. The explosion was the third in 10 days that Russian officials associate with Chechen troubles. On Sept. 4, a car bomb demolished an apartment building housing Russian military families in the Dagestan city of Buynaksk, killing 64 people. On Aug. 31, a bomb rocked a Moscow shopping mall, killing one and injuring 40. Interior Minister Vladimir Rushailo said he had information that bin Laden, who is accused of masterminding the 1998 bombings of U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, had sent millions of dollars to the warlords leading the Dagestan campaign.

## Who caused the deadly fire at Waco?

**Named to lead** an investigation into the assault on the Branch Davidian compound on April 19, 1993, at Waco, Tex., former Republican Senator John Danforth promised to seek answers to the "dark questions." Danforth is to determine whether the FBI assault triggered a fire that left 80 people dead. Videotapes appear to show that the FBI used combustible tear gas in its attack, and the agency has acknowledged using "pyrotechnic devices."

# Wired for Success

## A self-taught nerd spearheads AOL's big push into Canada

**By Mary Janigan**

**In high school,** Stephen Bartkiw always juggled his homework with at least two part-time jobs. Usually three. On weekends, during the day, he clerked in a RadioShack store in St. Catharines, Ont., just as the chain was introducing primitive computers. In the evenings, he cooked at local restaurants, mastering the art of cuisine. By the time he graduated in 1980, he knew exactly what he wanted to do: work as much as possible. He strolled out of the classroom and into a manager's job at a troubled RadioShack store in the community of Dundas, Ont. Within months, the store was generating a profit—and he was *still* catering and cooking in his spare time. "I have been a workaholic since I was a kid. I love working," says the 37-year-old chief executive officer of AOL Canada Inc. "I think I would be categorized as type A." He pauses, almost apologetically. "But I don't have the time to cook anymore. I do this pretty much 18 hours a day."



Peter Jennings for the Royal Bank

*Bartkiw, Cleghorn seal their deal: connecting bank clients*

His dedication to the Toronto-based Internet service provider paid off handsomely two months ago when the staid Royal Bank of Canada forged an alliance with AOL's flamboyant parent, America Online Inc. Talks began last spring when senior bank officials trekked the few blocks from their elegant high-rise offices in downtown Toronto to Bartkiw's headquarters in a roomy, restored warehouse. For the Royal, anxious to expand its e-commerce capability, the combination of Bartkiw's expertise and his parent firm's worldwide client base of 18 million was irresistible. At the announcement, the former RadioShack manager who became a largely self-taught computer nerd shared the spotlight with Royal Bank CEO John Cleghorn and America Online U.S. executives.

It was a startling marriage of convenience. Bank officials took a big step into the electronic world, acquiring a 20-per-cent stake in AOL Canada for $89.5 million. The Royal Bank—with its U.S. banking and brokerage subsidiaries—has also forged a collaborative arrangement with AOL in both nations. Each company will now offer bundles of joint services to potential customers. AOL Canada also gets access to a potentially enormous customer base: the bank has 10 million clients worldwide. "This is a very good deal for both sides," says Elliot Schreiber, chief operating officer for the Toronto-based think-tank Alliance for Converging Technologies. "The Royal has now invested in someone who understands e-commerce. AOL, in turn, will become the virtual connection to the bank—the context of banking. That will get it directly in touch with more Canadians, offering more services."

And *that* is the strategic push which Bartkiw has sought since he joined AOL four years ago. Although 15 million of its 18 million clients reside in North America, AOL has only 130,000 household members in Canada. In contrast, there are 647,000 clients with Sympatico, an Internet service provider owned by five provincial telephone companies, including Bell Canada subsidiary Bell ActiMedia, which owns 75 per cent of it. AOL Canada needed more subscribers—and fast. "The bank deal will give us the opportunity to supercharge our mass-market efforts," says Bartkiw. "The possibilities are staggering."

The intense Bartkiw can recognize those possibilities because he has had such varied business experience. Oddly enough, his first real lesson in marketing came after RadioShack, in 1984, when he opened "a high-end restaurant in a low-end neighbourhood" of St. Catharines. A year later, in debt, he closed it. In that same year, he married Patricia, a pharmaceutical technician who has become a full-time homemaker, "the goddess of my life"—and mother of their 22-month old son Julian. Since then, Bartkiw has put together complete computer packages for small companies, devised an Internet service for doctors, developed an online news service for Southam Inc.—and helped to launch the trial of high-speed Internet service at Rogers Cablesystems Ltd. "This is my passion: interactive services have had a marked impact on my life," he says.

These days, AOL Canada, its U.S. parent and the Royal Bank are busily devising more possible services. The Royal Bank now has 420,000 clients who use its online banking and brokerage sites. AOL Canada will offer its services to those clients as well—in a deal that Bartkiw will only describe as a "unique combined offer." AOL will also reach out to the bank's 6.5 million credit-card customers. And it may install AOL kiosks in the 1,400 branches: representatives would demonstrate online banking and brokerage services—*and* treats such as instant messaging that AOL provides. "AOL has a very good consumer product and a good track record, but it did not have a good distribution chain in Canada," says Eamon Hoey, senior partner of Hoey Associates Telecommunications Consulting Services Inc. "Now, they get a significant chain. AOL can even say: 'Subscribe to AOL—and put it on your Royal Bank Visa card.'"



Phil Snel, Maclean's

*Bartkiw: he's come a long way from his days as a cook and a RadioShack clerk*

The deal could also kick start the fledgling Canadian e-commerce industry. Bartkiw calculates that Canada is two years behind the United States in terms of market evolution, with about 17 per cent of Canadian households paying for Internet access compared with about 28 per cent in the United States. He hopes the AOL-Royal Bank partnership will lure more customers to the Net. If there are more AOL clients, more retailers may be tempted to offer goods for sale. "Getting more Canadians online is critical," he says.

At the Royal Bank, such talk is sweet. The 130-year-old bank suffered a huge blow last year when the federal government blocked its merger with the Bank of Montreal. As a backup strategy, it decided to move far more rapidly into the expanding world of e-commerce. The bank already owns an Atlanta-based online bank, Security First Network Bank, and a New York City-based online brokerage, Bull & Bear Securities Inc. Now AOL's U.S. customers will be introduced to the Royal's brokerage and banking services. And AOL and the bank can work together to secure the payments system—so that merchants and customers can do business online with less fear of fraud. "Small business represents a very strong constituency for us," says Royal Bank vice-chairman Marty Lippert.

The Royal's deal with AOL has not precluded a deal with another potential partner: Bell ActiMedia. Bell had been examining AOL because an alliance would combine the client base of AOL and Sympatico—and it would provide access to AOL's U.S. content. But that approach remains on hold. 20 per cent of Bell Canada is owned by Chicago-based Ameritech Corp., which, in turn, is merging with the Texas-based telecommunications giant, SBC Communications Inc., to create the largest U.S. local phone company. So Bell ActiMedia is consulting with SBC to ensure that they find a mutually satisfactory partner to supply content to Sympatico—and state-of-the-art technology for the portal. "We want to do it fast because we want to maintain the leadership role that we have with Sympatico in Canada," says ActiMedia president Serge Fortin. "AOL definitely has the content—but we have some problems with their technology."

Meanwhile, the Royal Bank-AOL honeymoon is flourishing. What happens if the traditionally pokey bank culture clashes with the high-speed Internet world? AOL is a highly disciplined business, says Lippert, and the bank has some very entrepreneurial employees. Asked the same question, Bartkiw laughs. "We view this as a long-term deal, kind of a marriage," he says. "And I plan to be married for a very long time." m



Deirdre McMurdy

# Yawning to be free

**It used to be** called "the graveyard shift." It was the exclusive domain of security guards, custodial staff, nurses and bakers. But while our society and our culture are still geared to daytime activity, a growing number of people work around the clock in an era of global business markets. Currency and stock traders, computer experts, journalists and call-centre employees have all joined the ranks of those who work while others sleep. In fact, about 30 million North Americans now work outside the hours of 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

So far, the corporate implications of having two distinct workforces hasn't been closely examined by the usual pack of management gurus. But whether or not senior executives are aware of it, their night staff is a breed apart. The overnight shift often attracts those slightly out of step in other aspects of their lives as well. Their presence gives a company a quirkier character than it has in official business hours.

Even driving to work at a time when most people are heading home sets the night crew apart. Traffic is heavier—and more perilous—on Friday mornings, when the bars close in the early morning hours. Muscle cars rev at stoplights and race each other along the highway. And that's not the only urban, nocturnal wildlife: raccoons, foxes and coyotes nose through garbage cans and skulk through public parks and ravines. A surprising number of people ride bicycles along deserted streets. And why are all those lights blazing in houses and apartment buildings at three o'clock in the morning?

There is a special intimacy among the overnight staffers. Without the constraints of political correctness, jokes are more frequent—and wildly off-colour. The looser operating structure and large pockets of silence in surrounding areas of the building also lead to more personal, reflective conversations—with a confessional aspect. Another reason for the close bond is that people on overnight shifts often don't have much of a social life. Only others who work those hours appreciate the toll they take and the benefits they offer. Sleep is a favourite topic for discussion, but it's considered bad form to complain about the lack of it. There is a macho pride among overnight workers, including irreverent references to "dayside scum"—those who work conventional hours.

Stanley Coren, author of the 1996 book *Sleep Thieves*, says the disruption of the body's natural circadian rhythms takes a severe toll on the physical and mental health of overnight workers. He describes night shifters as "chronically unhappy, continually irritable." It's true that things easily get blown out of proportion in those fragile, early hours. For a reporter following a news story, it appears more urgent and more important than otherwise. Routine setbacks become disproportionately frustrating: a jammed photocopier or a misfiring computer become symbolic of the isolation and lack of support in an office in the middle of night.

But Coren's warnings about the long-term cost of turning the clock on its head overlook the most compelling attraction: freedom. The small nuisance disruptions that plague a typical day job are absent. The telephone isn't constantly ringing; no one calls impromptu meetings that devour hours of productive time. There is less scrutiny, and most workers are perfectly able to function without it.

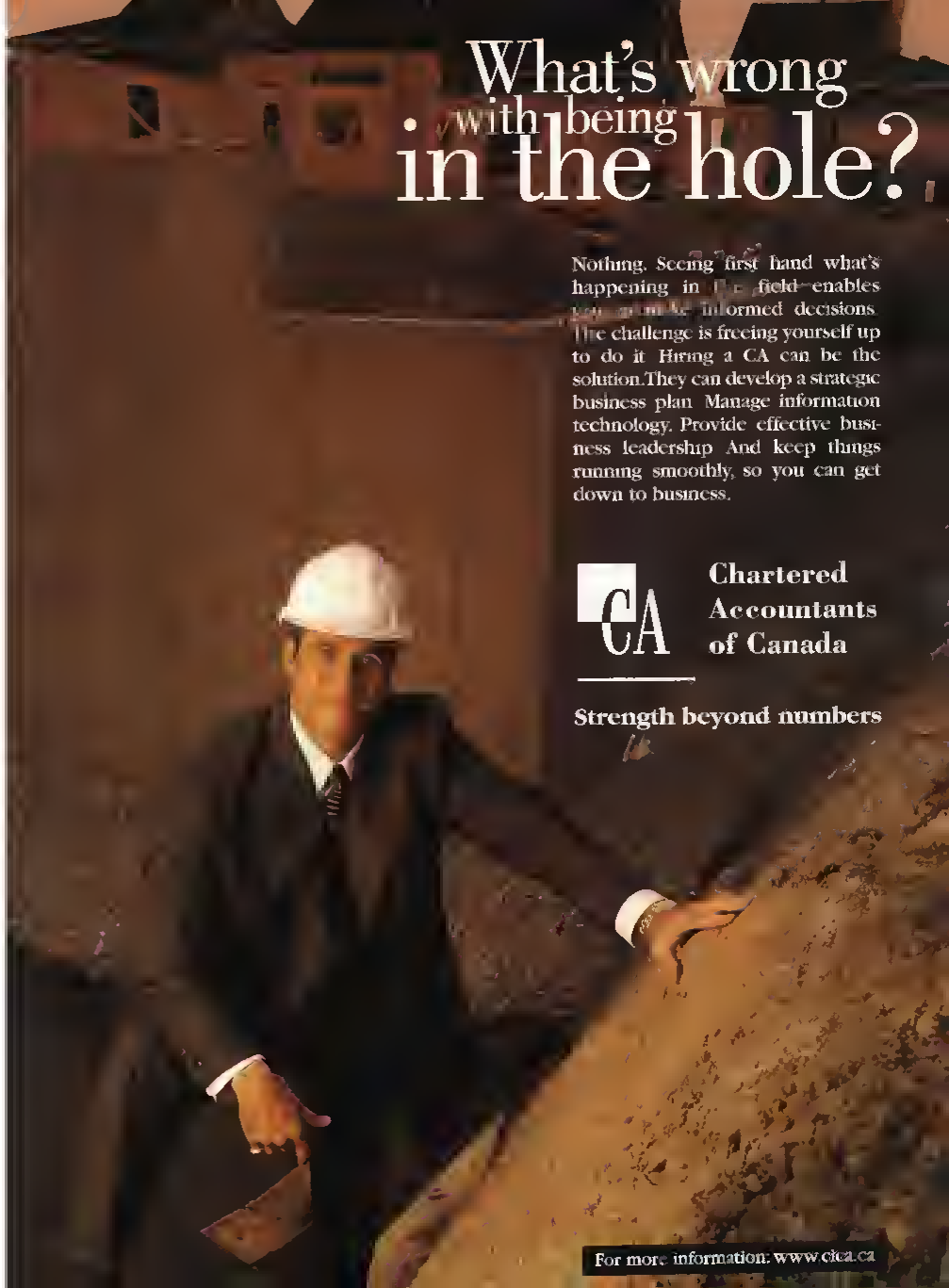
But this outlaw contingent poses curious challenges for modern managers focused on the fashionable theme of corporate cultural integration. The structural hierarchy that is adhered to by day is greatly diminished at night. The supervisors of a night shift learn to bend the rules and to move with the mutinous spirit that prevails.

**Recently**, after almost four years, I left a job as business editor of CTV's *Canada AM*. It entailed getting up at 2:30 every morning, and reporting to work an hour later. At a time that represents the middle of the night to most people, the staff who work on the show got up, and did all the same things—and more—as people on daytime shifts. But that early alarm bell was also the call of the wild. There was the betting pool where we all placed wagers on how long it would take the lineup editor to start swearing after he entered the newsroom. There was the Dead Head tape editor who indulged his taste for George Thorogood and the Destroyers every morning around four o'clock. There was the routine slagging of the prep work done during the day. There was an elaborate protocol concerning which on-air staffers had their hair and makeup done at precisely what hour.

It was always interesting to watch the overnight edge soften as the day staff filtered into the newsroom, later in the morning. And then there was the challenge when guests, who normally held daytime jobs, first met the denizens of the night. Because the show goes to air at 6:30 a.m., many of them were treated to wake-up calls from a co-ordinator—whose thick, Chilean accent probably baffled them all the more. Most of the guests arrived—groggy and still fragile—with just minutes to air on live, national television.

Now, it's time to work a daytime job, like most other people. But a more normal routine will never replace the rush of life off-shift, and the great characters and friends found in the wee small hours of the morning.



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# Business Notes

## Jobs on the slide

Canada's job market slumped in August with the number of full-time jobs in the economy falling by 35,000. The unemployment rate rose slightly to 7.8 per cent, an increase of one-tenth of a a percentage point from July. But economists predict that job creation will pick up in coming months because of healthy growth in the economy.

## Ford is the test model

Canadian Auto Workers union president Buzz Hargrove announced that Ford Motor Co. of Canada is the union's first strike target in its talks with the Big Three automakers. The strike deadline for the 12,930 CAW members at Ford is midnight of Sept. 21. Under so-called pattern bargaining, the initial contract becomes the template for negotiations with the other auto firms. Key among the issues for the CAW are improvements to the pension plan.

## Taking the TSE reins

To face the competitive world of electronic trading, the Toronto Stock Exchange has picked Barbara Stymiest, its former chairwoman, as its president. Stymiest, the chief financial officer of the brokerage firm Nesbitt Burns, got the nod following a global search.

## Molson sheds staff

Molson Inc. has fired 287 people or 18 per cent of its salaried employees, delivering on a promise to shareholders to cut costs. Marketing and sales staff in the Toronto-based North American operations bore the brunt of the cuts. The move will result in a one-time accounting charge of $36 million.

## Unlocking WIC

Tired of waiting for CanWest Global and Shaw Communications to agree on carving up WIC Western International Communications Ltd., the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission has called for public hearings next month. Shaw Communications Inc. gained 52 per cent of WIC early in 1998, but a deadlock emerged because rival CanWest Global Communications Corp. owned 46 per cent.

## Media moguls at the altar



Suzanne Plunkett: AP

*Redstone, Karmazin, creating a giant*

**In the biggest** media merger ever, Viacom Inc. is set to acquire CBS Corp. for $55 billion in stock. If the deal gets regulatory approval, the combined company would be the number 2 media firm in the world, with a stock market value of $106 billion, second only to Time Warner Inc., which is valued at $119 billion. Viacom's media holdings include the Paramount film studios, cable networks MTV, VH1 and Nickelodeon, and the Blockbuster video chain. With CBS, it would gain a major TV network and the largest group of radio stations in the United States.

As interesting as the deal is the unfolding drama of its leadership. Viacom's chairman, Sumner Redstone, would be chief executive of the merged entity, ceding the running of the company to CBS's Mel Karmazin, who would be the president and chief operating officer. Observers are asking whether even a behemoth can house two such driven individuals—and two such differing styles. Redstone, 76, adores film and TV parties, while Karmazin, his 56-year-old heir apparent, inclines to takeout pizza.

## Airline takeover fight heats up

**Air Canada investors** are savouring the prospect of an all-out bidding war for the airline as the carrier tries to fend off a takeover bid by Toronto financier Gerry Schwartz. In documents delivered to Air Canada last week, Schwartz's Onex Corp. outlined its plan to acquire cash-strapped Canadian Airlines and merge it with the more successful carrier. But Air Canada dismissed the bid as "below-market," and rumours swirled that the airline is rounding up global partners for a counteroffer. Several large Bay Street brokerage houses purchased large blocks of Air Canada shares, a move widely seen as a prelude to a counterbid.

## Financial outlook

**Canadians can** look forward to above-average economic growth over the next five years compared with people in the rest of the industrialized world, a major think-tank predicts.




The 29-nation Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development expects that Canada's economy will expand at an annual rate of 2.75 per cent through 2004, compared with a predicted average of 2.5 per cent for the OECD as a whole. The OECD says rising consumer confidence, tax cuts and favourable interest rates should more than offset a decline in export growth.

The scenario painted by the OECD marks a considerable improvement over Canada's economic performance so far this decade.

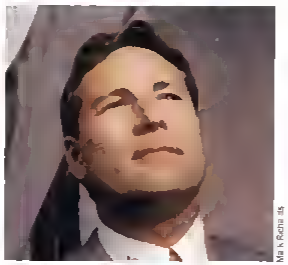


Ross Laver

# Make way for the Cisco kid

**Which company** comes to mind when you think of the personal computer industry? That's easy: even many people who have never used a PC would probably zero in on Microsoft Corp. OK, now think of a company that is synonymous with the Internet. America Online? Yahoo? Once-mighty Netscape Communications Corp.? The list of possibilities is lengthy, but if you ask around you're unlikely to find much of a consensus.

Don Listwin is determined to change that. A Saskatoon-born engineer who left Canada early in his career in 1984, Listwin, 40, is executive vice-president and chief marketing officer of Cisco Systems Inc. in San Jose, Calif. With $18.3 billion in annual revenues, Cisco is a giant by any standard. But its specialty is networking equipment—the routers and switches that make up the plumbing of the Internet and corporate computer networks. The analogy is apt: like plumbing, Cisco's products are widely used but invisible to the average person, and therefore underappreciated.



Mark Richards

*Listwin: fighting on a new front*

None of this would matter so much if 15-year-old Cisco was content to stick to its existing market. But the computer-networking industry is in the throes of a revolution as the world's telephone companies retool their voice networks to handle an anticipated explosion of data and multimedia traffic. In the scramble to grab a piece of that business, Cisco is being forced to do battle with a handful of much larger competitors—traditional phone-equipment suppliers such as Canada's Nortel Networks Corp., New Jersey-based Lucent Technologies Inc. and Germany's Siemens AG.

In this war, propaganda is as important as technology. Seeking to position itself as an Internet powerhouse, Nortel is spending $150 million this year on advertising, three times its ad budget in 1998. Not to be outdone, Cisco has just launched a slick new series of TV commercials that emphasize how the Internet is changing the way people work, play and learn. Each ad concludes with a simple tag line: "Cisco—empowering the Internet generation."

"This is a major transition year for us," explains Listwin, who graduated from the University of Saskatchewan in 1980. Until now, the company's principal rivals have been fellow Silicon Valley start-ups like 3Com Corp. and Bay Networks Corp., acquired last year by Nortel. But with the coming convergence of the Internet and traditional telecommunications, "we're fighting on a new front against larger and better-financed companies."

To gauge how well it is doing in the marketing war, Cisco regularly surveys corporate decision-makers and American consumers to determine their level of awareness and trust in the company. One such study, three years ago, found that key executives at many large U.S. companies lacked confidence in Cisco's management, particularly when compared with other high-tech giants such as Microsoft and Intel Corp.

Hoping to change that, Listwin has worked hard to raise the profile not only of Cisco itself but of his boss, CEO John Chambers, a hyperkinetic salesman whose oft-repeated ambition is to lead "the most influential company in history." The resulting flurry of fawning U.S. business magazine profiles and keynote speeches at industry conferences appears to have paid off: in a recent Cisco survey, corporate customers awarded the company's senior management a confidence rating of 79 on a scale of zero to 100. "At 79," Listwin says proudly, "you're getting into a level where people trust you with almost every part of their technology business." That's important because Chambers and Listwin want people to think of Cisco as a leader of the digital revolution, not just a boring supplier of networking hardware and software.

**Outside of the corporate** and investment world, Listwin concedes, the company is still largely unknown. Perhaps not for long, however. In an unabashed effort to raise public awareness of the company, Cisco has teamed up with the United Nations Development Program to organize next month's massive NetAid Internet broadcast, a project aimed at raising money for the world's poor. The Oct. 9 event will feature live, overlapping concerts in London, New Jersey and Geneva and an array of stars including Celine Dion, David Bowie, Lauryn Hill and Jewel.

"Our business goal with NetAid is clearly to become better recognized among the public," says Listwin, Cisco's representative on the NetAid steering committee. "We're building the biggest Web site ever, with capacity for 60 million hits an hour plus worldwide radio and TV coverage, and failure is not an option." If that doesn't make Cisco a household name, nothing will.



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Daniel Sawyer/In Motion

*Dotto: better to have some foul-ups now than many failures on Jan. 1*

# What's in a glitch?

## Y2K debugging can be more painful than it sounds

**Shortly after midnight** on a clear night in June, four million gallons of raw sewage began to pour out of a manhole in the Los Angeles suburb of Van Nuys. Within hours, the disgusting mess had flowed along several streets and down into a huge park. Street crews worked until dawn, hosing down the roads and vacuuming the soiled park grass. The smell, as one resident said with West Coast understatement, "wasn't pleasant."

The cause of the problem was a computer error, which occurred as officials at the Van Nuys waste-treatment plant tested systems to see whether they would function in the year 2000 or fall prey to the so-called Y2K (or millennium) bug. Like government departments and companies around the world, the waste controllers simply rolled their computers ahead as though the new year had arrived. But this would go down as a failed test, a "glitch"—in the innocuous language of computer programming. The rollover had shut down the main sewage line.

Studies show most critical systems in North America are Y2K-ready—although a defence department study revealed that several Canadian sectors, including hospitals, airports and prisons, are months behind in rewriting programs or installing new software. And already experts have confronted serious glitches in Canada and around the globe. In England, 4,000 London homes lost power for an entire August weekend when Y2K upgrades to meters failed. In July, Manchester's airport booted up a new Y2K-ready system and the information screens went haywire—giving passengers incorrect departure times, guiding others to the wrong baggage carousels and displaying erroneous check-in information. July 7 was equally chaotic at Paris's Charles de Gaulle Airport as Air France discovered that its attempt to millennium-proof its baggage system hadn't worked.

Closer to home, there have also been problems. During a February Y2K test, the Ontario government issued hundreds of traffic violation notices dated a hundred years in the future. Also in February, 2,700 residents got a particularly nasty jolt while new Y2K-compliant systems were being installed at Ottawa City Hall. Among those affected was Erwin Dreessen, who discovered that the city had yanked $1,880—a year's worth of property taxes—out of his bank account without notice. Mayor Jim Watson wrote Dreessen an apology, but the taxpayer is still frustrated. "Somewhere in the bowels of the tax administration," he says, "someone dropped a stitch."

In fact, some of the Y2K foul-ups are caused by people rather than software. In Texas, a Bank One clerk inadvertently sent out 1,200 bogus overdraft notices to customers in April; they were only meant to be props during Y2K testing. Technicians at a New York City insurance company rolled the date forward on the computers in January and happily noted that the system worked fine. But they forgot to roll the date back, triggering a feature that deletes files that have been inactive for a number of months. A similar oversight by Hydro Quebec technicians left utility executives locked out of the garage at the Montreal headquarters. The computer read their passes as being expired.

Vancouver-based technology commentator Steve Dotto believes that, despite inconvenience, the recent spate of Y2K failures and miscues are a positive sign that needed repair work is getting done. "You may not like it," he says, "but the problem gives you time to do something. Plus, companies are probably finding other potential problems they never even thought about." In Canada, Y2K testing is certainly widespread. A recent Statistics Canada study found 99.5 per cent of Canadian organizations with more than 250 employees making fixes to their systems.

As the new year grows closer, there will be more tests, and more glitches—but experts like Dotto say that testing, failing and recovering is a small price compared with going down for the count on New Year's Day.

**Susan Oh**

Aided by technology, Canadians are scrambling to fill out their family trees

# The Search for Roots

By John Nicol

**Jim Hill left his home** on Vancouver Island last month for a two-day drive to Utah. For the next eight nights, the 63-year-old retiree bedded down in a sleeping bag he bought for moose-hunting 40 years ago. But his quarry was not moose, it was ancestors. Within hours of arriving at the Mormon church's Family History Library in Salt Lake City, the largest genealogical library in the world, he suddenly found himself alive with discovery. For a few moments there he was—in the shoes of teenager James Edmund Hill, afloat on the ironclad, SS North American, on a 12-day journey to Quebec City in 1869. "At 16, he set out across the Atlantic without any family," says Hill, elated about stumbling upon the details of his great-grandfather's emigration from Ireland. "I bet he didn't sleep too much at night, all excited, wondering, 'What am I going to do when I get there?' But he was a real go-getter. Within five years, he had a wife and his own business." That business, which started life as Hill's Machine Shop in Toronto, is now in the hands of a third generation—a proud legacy and the springboard for the kind of personal journey that so many are now embarking upon.

At the end of a century awash with humanity's comings and goings, Hill's immigrant tale is not uncommon, nor is his fascination with tracing his roots. Genealogy has become almost a sacred mission for tens of thousands of Canadians, and millions of people worldwide. Canada's Centennial in 1967 and Alex Haley's 1976 book, *Roots*, fuelled earlier explosions in searching out family trees. This latest phenomenon springs from the Internet. With only minimal coaching, people are flocking to Web sites such as the Mormons' new *www.FamilySearch.org* or *www.RootsWeb.com* to transport themselves back in time (page 44). Genealogy has become second to pornography as the most popular use of the World Wide Web, with two million sites and counting. When the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the Mormons, set up their free Internet site in May, it received a staggering 30 million electronic hits its first day of operation.

The Mormons, whose mission it is to link the human chain all the way from Adam, have turned their Salt Lake City archives into the mecca of family searches. Two billion names, mostly from European countries but with a steady influx of data from Asia and Africa, are available free of charge through its genealogical library. Four hundred million vital statistics are on its Web site, which is accessed each day by 3,500 Canadians.

For many, of course, genealogy is purely a hobby, a way for empty nesters to pass their leisure years or to prepare for holidays in the old country. For some, it can become an all-consuming passion to find out who they are and where they came from, induced perhaps by end-of-century reflection or a chance to experience the ultimate voyage—back through time. But for a significant number, this quest is a matter of life and death.

The explosion of electronic data banks has given birth to a new profession: biotechnicians who can use the world's vital statistics to home in on the genetic connection underpinning heart disease, cancer and maladies like Alzheimer's—and the new drugs that may be specifically tailored to combat them (page 47). For certain middle-aged women, who see friends and relatives suffering from breast cancer, it is becoming vital to know what is in their genes—what a detailed family history can tell them—before they undergo radical preventive surgeries.

Surprisingly, the most dedicated questors, according to a survey for *American Demographics* magazine, are 35 to 44 years old, a group whose nomadic days are over and who are often raising young kids. Stephen Young, a London, Ont., native now in charge of the Canada-U.S. reference section at the Mormon library in Salt Lake City, says those in that age group show a strong desire to reconnect to their roots. "People live farther away from their families," says Young, 43, "so they lose contact with the older family members who typically pass on the oral history. They want to fill in the gaps."

**Young's own experience** hints at the highs and lows of the genealogical journey. His research led him to England and a disused church in a Yorkshire hamlet, where he scaled the bell tower to find the name of an ancestor from the 1700s cast on the bell. His search also took him to the gallows of a jail in Milton, Ont., where a relative was hanged for murdering two women. "You have to be prepared for whatever you find," says Young. Or, as the old joke among genealogists goes: "I'll give you $50 to look up my family tree, and $500 to hush it up."

Don Treble, 67, had no fear fleshing out his family tree. Over the past 10 years, the retired Ottawa bureaucrat and



*St. Denis among her heirlooms: creating a living memory*



*Young at the Mormon library: uniting families for eternity*

John Reis / Maclean's

engineer travelled to France, Ireland, England and Australia researching his ancestors; he then followed the leads to unearth distant cousins. Among his ancestral family an Elizabethan spy, a lawyer-convict who was in jail while his wife and mistress were pregnant with his babies, and a knight who fought alongside William the Conqueror in the 1066 Norman takeover of England. Along the way, Treble accumulated his great-great-grandfather's Bible and discovered the family name mentioned in a Saxon charter of 739 AD. "What turns me on," says Treble, who meets regularly with a distant cousin who is a British earl, "is not so much who these ancestors of mine were, but what was happening at the time, and how they fit in."

Erik LeGendre, 27, of Toronto gave no thought to his ancestors until someone mentioned his last name translated as "The In-law" and was probably meant as a slur. That was enough motivation for LeGendre to find a connection to French math genius Adrien-Marie Legendre, and to a family crest symbolizing ancient French roots and aristocracy. LeGendre had the crest tattooed on his back out of "a sense of pride, and in part because of a foolish notion that it would somehow help me with my identity," he says. "The more I discovered about the adventures of the first LeGendres in Canada, and from what I understand about Adrien, I feel that if I didn't make some sort of contribution, it would be a great waste."

LeGendre reconstructed his past at the National Archives in Ottawa. Along with Salle Gagnon in Montreal's central library, North York Central Library in Toronto, the Saskatchewan Genealogical Society Library in Regina, and the Nova Scotia Archives in Halifax, it has been overrun with family detectives. Two of the Halifax regulars are Barbara and William Verge, who make the annual trek from their home in Grand Bend, Ont., each summer in pursuit of ancestors. "I try to imagine what they lived like," says Barbara, a 64-year-old retired secretary, of the 7,000 relatives she has discovered going back 11 generations. "It's like a disease—it gets under your skin."

Skin has long been a factor in genealogy searches. Available written records were mostly of white races, but that is changing. The Mormons have microfilmed records from 105 countries including the Philippines and Sri Lanka, where Mormon technicians stepped in as decay threatened to destroy the vital statistics of birth, marriage and death. Some nationalities, such as the Chinese and Koreans, have their lineage embedded in their names. Individuals can trace their family tree back hundreds of years by the use of time-honoured words and knowledge of the ancestral home (page 46).

Still, for groups like North American blacks descended from slaves, the search is particularly arduous. Tracing black roots is hampered by the haphazard way surnames were chosen upon release from slavery, not to mention the horrors of slavery itself. "Slavery breeding was like cattle breeding—there were no vital statistics," notes Sharon Oliver, a retired health-care executive in Wolfville, N.S., who now owns a consulting business aimed at developing black enterprises. "Anything we extract comes from slave-owners' diaries or ships' logs."

## The gathering of the clans—whether Acadians or Yorkshire émigrés—brings in the tourist dollars



Rick Eglseder for Maclean's

*Cyr in an Acadian vest: a brutal history of displacement*

Oliver's firm would like to establish a data bank of genetic information from Africa that could be matched to people whose ancestors were taken from the continent in chains 400 years ago. Finances and other obstacles have stalled the project, but she maintains it is scientifically feasible. One problem, she admits: "How do you walk into 48 African countries and say, 'We're here for your DNA?'"

What is an obstacle for some, however, can mean business for others. Rick and Sandra Roberts began Global Genealogy Supply as a sideline in 1992, but within only a few years it prompted Sandra, then Rick, to give up their full-time jobs. In 1997, the company earned $80,000 distributing maps, charts, archival supplies, genealogy books, software and CDs; this year, they are on track for nearly $1 million in sales. "It's not that we're that smart," said Rick, 46, a former trucking company executive whose Web site magazine now has 10,000 active subscribers and up to 41,000 casual readers. "More and more baby boomers, empty nesters with disposable income and disposable time, are getting into it. They see an urgency in getting their family tree done, what with their parents and grandparents getting on in years."

**Even governments** have come to recognize the allure of cash-laden, roots-searching tourists. New Brunswick and Nova Scotia are helping sponsor 80 different family reunions tied to Yorkshire 2000, the gathering next summer in Sackville, N.B., of descendants from the celebrated English county. The Acadians regular get-together every five years drew 500,000 to Louisiana last month. Other entrepreneurs are selling books or magazines geared to particular ethnic groups, or non-acid inks to help preserve documents until at least the next millennium. This fall, the University of Toronto is offering Canada's first full-certification program in genealogical studies for the growing number of professional family trackers. While in Hanley, Sask., Lewis and Dorothy Lockhart are swamped trying to help those with native blood establish their roots. Especially for native women who were disfranchised for marrying non-natives, establishing their legitimacy can be a valuable first step in gaining housing or other benefits from band councils or recent land-claim settlements.

The insights into Canadian history, gleaned from family searching, fascinate Yvon Cyr, an expert on Acadian heritage. When the British expelled Acadians from the Maritimes in the 1750s, Cyr says, "they weren't allowed to take much with them—men went in one ship, women in another, and children went wherever the hell they got shipped to. The problem in searching is that some of the ships went down, and children and their families and husbands and wives never got back together again. It's quite a story." Based in Guelph, Ont., Cyr has compiled CDs of Acadian families and traced some of the 110,000 names in his tree through family Bibles and other heirlooms.

Other Canadian searches are complicated by the transient nature of immigrants, especially in the 1800s. Another problem is that all Canadian census information after 1901 is protected by privacy guarantees in the Statistics Act, which genealogists are lobbying the federal government

## The Mormons' genealogical gift

**The Church** of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, founded in 1830 by American prophet Joseph Smith Jr., has just completed filming the vital records of Newfoundland. It is filming Crown land records in British Columbia, vital records and wills in Prince Edward Island, and it has ongoing projects in Ontario and Quebec. Overall, the Mormons, as they are commonly known, have 300 microfilm-producing cameras operating in 47 countries. Their climate-controlled vault carved into the Rocky Mountains of Utah holds the world's most complete master list of dates of births, deaths and marriages. The ultimate objective, begun in 1894, is a grand link of the human chain. But for the moment, the great list is just there for people to use as they see fit.

Two billion names from the list are available free of charge at the Mormons' Salt Lake City library, part of a huge downtown complex. The library, with two floors of Canada-U.S. material and separate floors for international data, is swarmed by 2,400 visitors each day. The information can also be ordered on microfilm from any of the church's 3,411 Family History Centers around the world.

Since May, there have also been 400 million names on the Mormons' *www.FamilySearch.org* Web site; another 200 million will be added this fall, all free of charge. The Web page has 7,000 links to other sites, and prompted Tracey from Alberta to write: "What a great site this is. Trying to research my history was impossible before now. Today, I managed to go back five generations on my paternal grandmother's side! Thank you!!!"

The generosity of the Mormons has astounded the genealogical world. Elder Todd Christofferson, executive director of the family history department, allows that while it's "un-American" to offer such a service for free, it is part of the church's mission to have its 11 million adherents identify their ancestors and baptize them into the faith. An affront sometimes to relatives of a different belief when a long-dead common ancestor is baptized by proxy as a Mormon, the practice is to bind families—ultimately the human family—for eternity.

J.N.

to change. In Quebec, which has the oldest genealogy society in Canada and the most comprehensive vital records, searches are muddled by frequent migration across the American border right up until the 1950s.

For Louise St. Denis, a leading expert on French-Canadian genealogy, it is not enough to record dates and names of ancestors. She has made videos and calendars marking the births, marriages and deaths of generations of ancestors, and she creates wreaths out of keepsakes. One, surrounding a photo of her grandparents, includes her grandfather's pipe, shaving brush and razor kit and her grandmother's glasses, rosary beads and scarf. "If you keep them in a drawer, someone will clean up when you go, and throw them out, and no one will know their significance," says St. Denis, 44, who is a sought-after speaker across North America and offers one hard-learned piece of advice: "Record everything."

St. Denis remembers taking a shoebox full of photos to a great aunt in Quebec who was nine months shy of 100. "Her memory was as sharp as anything. 'Oh my goodness,' she said, 'I haven't seen these photos in years.' She died three months later. I was so pleased that I had recorded her telling us all sorts of stories, things my grandfather did that my father had never heard of. On the drive home my Dad said: 'Louise, I have never been to so many cemeteries in my life.' That's what it's all about, getting your knees dirty, cleaning up headstones and putting together all the pieces of our lives."



Don Getz for Maclean's

*Oliver in Wolfville can DNA re-link the chain that slavery aimed to destroy?*

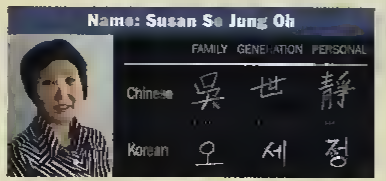
# Korea: where each name is a family tree

*Unlike Europeans and North Americans, many Asians carry their lineage with them in their names in a system that is as flexible and subtle as a Chinese brush stroke. Maclean's Associate Editor Susan Oh explains*

**What is in a name?** A lot, if your ancestors hail from China or Korea.

Like most Koreans, I have my family tree built into my name. *Jok-bo*, as it is called, is a system that identifies and helps maintain family lineage by the use of naming schemes. And it is as commonly used today by ordinary Koreans as it was by the ruling elite when the practice was first recorded during the last years of the Koryo Kingdom more than 600 years ago.

Under *Jok-bo*, long-ago clan elders chose which scheme their descendants would follow. Each Korean has two personal names, one of which denotes the generation and position on the family tree. The generational name is a word from an established source such as a famous poem or a Confucian proverb whose well-known phrases establish the order of successive generations. This is why siblings have one other name in common besides the family name. For instance, my Korean name is Oh Se Jung; my younger sister and brother are Oh Se Eun and Oh Se Won. All my paternal cousins—however distant—also have Se as a generational name.




Such a system makes it easy to track down relatives or ancestors, as long as you know from which town or area your forebears came. It also has an essential function: it averts marriage within the same family lineage. Common surnames like Kim or Lee flow from several different clan lines that are differentiated by the region in which that branch started.

What's more, in historical times, when war, famine and disease nearly wiped out entire families, your name became your calling card, a way to establish a sometimes precarious social position. In Korea today, *Jok-bo*—though it doesn't have legal status—is still used as a critical system for tracing people. *Jok-bo* information is listed by the Korean census bureau and is used by the government as an administrative tool. It can even lead to a socially and maternally rewarding marriage through a matchmaker.

But for those of us scattered around the world, *Jok-bo* is simply a way to maintain ties with a fading past. It is easy to lose a sense of identity when people move from rice paddies to skyscrapers, or change countries, within one generation. But I'll always have my good name.

# Building a family tree

## How to start

**Alex Haley of *Roots*** fame traced his family's history largely through word-of-mouth stories, which is still the best information to have at hand. The next step is to explore how-to books or such free Web sites as the Mormons' *www.FamilySearch.org* or the community-run *www.RootsWeb.com*. People searching for a lost ancestor can leave a message under a family name on one of the popular genealogical Web sites for a possible e-mail response. Sometimes all it takes is to punch in a family name on an Internet search to open a promising trail. The Web is full of professional genealogists who will search for a fee. An old census can reveal how much land an ancestor owned, how it was divided and whether it had a stone or wood house, it can also provide family religion, education level, nationality or ethnic background, and certain health information. The almost universal advice from the pros: take careful notes.



Peter Bregg/Maclean's

*LeGendre wearing his family crest. a sense of pride and a need for identity*

## Most popular sites

Bob's Your Uncle, eh!, a search engine of the Toronto Reference Library
**http://indexes.mtrl.toronto.on.ca/geneatogy/index.htf**

Cyndi's List of Genealogy Sites
**http://www.cyndislist.com**

Canadian Genealogy and History Links
**http://www.islandnet.com/~jveinot/cghl/cghl.html**

Ontario Genealogical Society
**http://www.ogs.on.ca/**

National Archives of Canada
**http://www.archives.ca/**

Canada GenWeb Project, a communal enterprise for a global library
**http://www.rootsweb.com/~canwgw/cngenwebe.htmt**

WorldGenWeb
**http://worldgenweb.org/**

Genealogy Gateway to the Web
**http://www.gengateway.com/**

Journal of Online Genealogy
**http://www.onlinegenealogy.com/**

Jewish Genealogy
**http://www.jewishgen.org**

AfriGeneas
**http://afrigeneas.com/**

## For the advanced searcher

- Passenger lists of ships arriving at major Canadian ports between 1865 and 1935 are available at the National Archives and local ports. Halifax's Pier 21 will post the names of 900,000 people arriving at all ports between 1925 and 1935 on the Internet by next spring.

- The Hudson's Bay Co. kept exhaustive records on the earliest fur traders and settlers in the West from 1670 to 1870. A selected list is at
**http://www.gov.mb.ca/chc/archives/hbca/resource/publish.html**

- Names of more than 100,000 children who were sent to Canada from Great Britain between 1869 and the 1930s have been indexed by the British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa at the National Archives.
**http://www.archives.ca/exec/nnweb.dll?fs&020110&e&tnp&0**

- The Canadian Virtual War Memorial lists names, death dates and final resting places of more than 110,000 Canadians and Newfoundlanders who died in the First and Second World Wars.
**http://www.vac-acc.gc.ca/general/sub.cfm?source=collections/virtualmem**

- Aboriginal Peoples guide to government records at
**http://www.archives.ca/exec/nnweb.dll?fs&02012001&e&top&0**



*Genetic counsellor Luanne MeNabb (left), Sterling: the importance of family history*

# Sleuthing for Medical Clues

## With 3,000 inheritable diseases, science is homing in on culprit genes

**The diagnosis** for Mary Sterling's aunt was schizophrenia. Sterling's uncle thought he had Parkinson's disease and her brother was told he was manic-depressive. Then, eight years ago, Sterling began suffering from depression, and worried she would end up like her aunt, incapacitated in a constant-care hospital. Or worse, like her uncle and brother who both committed suicide. Four years ago, following the discovery of her grandfather's death certificate, doctors came to believe they were all misdiagnosed. Sterling's grandfather had Huntington's disease, a late-onset degenerative neurological disorder that leads to dementia. Sterling, a homemaker in Peterborough, Ont., was tested for the Huntington's gene and found she had it. Doctors said she would gradually lose control of her brain over the next 25 years, and die from complications. The news, however, was totally liberating. "I was no longer ashamed," says Sterling, now 44. "I can't help the way I am; it's in my genes."

Scientists now believe 3,000 diseases are inherited. They have found the direct gene connection for such maladies as cystic fibrosis, a form of muscular dystrophy, epilepsy, early onset Alzheimer's, diabetes, some cancers, schizophrenia, hemophilia and sickle cell anemia. With advances in gene research occurring almost daily, medical journals are encouraging doctors to have patients—often at their own expense—trace their medical family tree as far back as possible to enhance the accuracy of diagnosis. It is no longer enough, in many cases, to be able to recite the ages at which your parents or grandparents died, not if you want the best treatment—as women with breast cancer are finding out.

Fiona Webster of London, Ont., saw her two sisters die of breast cancer. But she did not want to undergo radical surgery, such as a precautionary mastectomy, unless she knew she had the mutated gene that increases the risk but is not always inherited by all siblings. A blood test at a private lab showed she didn't—and led the Ontario government to agree to pay for the test if patients show a compelling case history.

Compelling case histories—or medical pedigrees, as they are called—are "incredibly important, not only in learning what kind of diseases you might be susceptible to, but in tailoring drugs to your particular genetic makeup," says William Hockett, director of corporate communications with Myriad Genetics Inc., the Salt Lake City firm that developed the breast cancer test. "There are drugs that are appropriate for you if you have no risk of heart disease in your family. There will be more drugs like that in the future."

To create a medical pedigree, families need official death certificates, but they should weigh them against other information, says Stanley Diamond, 66, president of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Montreal. "The problem is, families don't share their genetic history or medical story. You have to ask those questions the right way, so you don't give the impression you're a gossip. This is a tool for future generations."

Not all family members want to know their genetic makeup. Four of Mary Sterling's remaining five siblings have chosen not to undergo the test for Huntington's (her oldest brother tested negative). Sterling wanted to know for the sake of her two grown children. That desire to know should become more widespread when the Human Genome Project, a multibillion-dollar international effort to map all of the estimated 70,000 to 100,000 genes in the human body, produces its preliminary findings next year. The map will spur on a new generation of targeted drugs. It will also embolden more people to search their past to arm themselves for their medical future.

John Nicol



*A rendering of the age of 'Lucy' four million years ago*



# Humanity's first steps

## Anthropology's latest findings are redefining the human tree

By Mark Nichols

**Where exactly** did the human tree take root? David Begun, a University of Toronto anthropologist, caught the scent of that mystery this summer while standing beside an abandoned iron mine in northeastern Hungary. In the mine's light-grey rock were four "specks" that turned out to be teeth in the fragmented skull of a European ape called *dryopithecus*. Begun thinks that ape, which lived about 10 million years ago, may have been a distant precursor of humans—an intervening creature that migrated south and led to the first upright beings on the steppes of Africa millions of years later.

This is a highly controversial idea since most scientists believe apes with early hominid traits developed in Africa—not Europe—eight to 10 million years ago even if they don't have the fossil evidence to prove it. Still, Begun's hypothesis has injected another new idea into a discipline that has been suddenly energized by several new discoveries this decade. Where anthropologists once envisioned a steady progression in which each stage of human development led to the next, they now see a twisting route, with evolutionary dead ends—and with pre-humans represented by more than one species at the same time. The human tree is "much more complicated than it used to be," says University of Toronto anthropologist Mario Gagnon. "It's a bushier kind of tree now."

Reminders of a man-ape connection never fail to arouse the ire of Christian fundamentalists—and prompted Kansas authorities last month to ban evolution from state school curriculums. But there is little scientific doubt that human history ultimately goes back to a tree-dwelling ancestor that gave rise to diverging lines of chimpanzee and hominid descendants. Scientists now believe the human journey was set in motion by a combination of genetic mutations and environmental change. When shifts in the Earth's surface seven or eight million years ago transformed forested eastern Africa into grassy plains, the early hominids there had a crucial advantage—a limited ability to walk on two feet. "The prairies created a need to abandon the trees," says Geoffrey Spetber, an Edmonton paleoanthropologist. "On two legs, they could run, handle weapons and hunt—it was a pivotal moment."

But it did not happen suddenly. Fossil discoveries show a succession of early hominids—some more graceful than others but known collectively as Australopithecines—lived in East Africa from about 4.5 million years ago. One was the celebrated Lucy, a young female whose skeletal remains, more than three million years old, were found in Ethiopia in 1974. Then, about 1.8 million years ago, a species appeared that for the first time clearly resembled modern humans. This was *Homo ergaster*, a tall, slender, highly mobile creature that walked fully upright and was the first human to spread out of Africa. The remains of a descendant, *Homo erectus*, was found as far east as Java and China—the celebrated "Peking Man," unearthed in the 1920s.

Those discoveries convinced some scientists that modern humans evolved independently in different parts of the world. But by the 1980s, genetic research had come up with a theory in which the first modern humans emerged genetically fully formed in the cauldron of Africa—and *then* expanded into the rest of the world. That hypothesis—the "African Eve" theory—has *Homo sapiens* originating in Africa within the past 200,000 years, then gradually replacing the descendants of the earlier out-migration—including the heavy-browed European Neanderthals who disappeared about 40,000 years ago during an ice age.

Though humankind's origins seem clearer today, much remains theoretical. Some experts even question the accuracy of the fossil trail. "There is so much information that we simply don't have," observes Bernard Wood, a paleoanthropologist at George Washington University in Washington D.C. That includes the identity of humankind's ultimate ancestors. But sometimes, as with discoveries like the Hungarian ape skull, that search can feel tantalizingly close.

# An act of Will

## A Canadian enjoys playing a grown-up

Actor **Eric McCormack** has hit the sitcom jackpot. Last year, the Toronto native won a lead role in *Will and Grace*, a comedy that is heading into its second season as one of the most popular shows on North American television. "It is so much fun to talk about a show that I love," says McCormack, whose character, Will Truman, a gay lawyer, lives with his best friend, Grace Adler, in Manhattan. "I have been in series where I cringed as I tried to promote them." It was guest roles in bad sitcoms that persuaded McCormack to wait for the right series to star in. "I wanted to do a witty, urbane, roust-see TV show, but I couldn't relate to the sitcoms about single twentysomethings sitting around their apartments," says McCormack, 36, who lives with his wife, Janet, in Los Angeles. "Will is smart, grown-up, and I related completely." And while NBC network executives prepared for an onslaught of disapproval for having a gay character in prime time, it never happened. "We didn't make him a pushy character," says McCormack. "The show is about being funny, not about being gay, and that has won us fans both straight and gay."

McCormack realized he wanted to be an actor after starring in a high-school production of *Godspell*. After attending Toronto's Ryerson Theatre School, he spent five years on stage at the Stratford Festival. "I was regularly criticized for having a modern style, better suited for television than the stage," McCormack says, "so I decided to get into TV." And how do his parents feel about Will? "My character in the TV series *Lonesome Dove: The Outlaw Years* killed someone every week," says McCormack, laughing. "That was a lot worse."



Chris Wahl / Retna Ltd.

*McCormack: 'I have been in series where I cringed'*



Rick Chard for Maclean's

# Elements of art

**Filmmaker Deepa Mehta** knows a thing or two about braving the elements. The first of her film trilogy, *Fire*, inflamed Indian communities around the world in 1997 for depicting the sexual relationship between two sisters-in-law in modern New Delhi. Now, the second instalment, *Earth*, set in the violence and upheaval of India's independence from British rule in 1947, may cause a stir when it opens in Canada on Sept. 24. Based on the 1991 novel *Cracking India* by Pakistan's prominent author **Bapsi Sidhwa**, *Earth* is a tender rendition of tumultuous Lahore, India, as seen through the eyes of an eight-year-old girl, just as the country collapses into civil war. The movie has already won critical praise and awards at international festivals.

Currently in India filming the final instalment, *Water*, Mehta, 50, says the three elements were an inspiration to illustrate the human condition. "These three, fire, earth and water, are elements that nurture and destroy," she says. "By their very nature, they carry a dichotomy." Duality is a way of life for the Indian-born Mehta, who immigrated to Canada when she was 23, and divides her time between Toronto and New Delhi. "In India, I'm a Canadian filmmaker," says Mehta. "And in Toronto, I've been called an Indian filmmaker. Why do I have to choose?" Clearly, she doesn't.

*Mehta in Toronto: 'nurture and destroy'*


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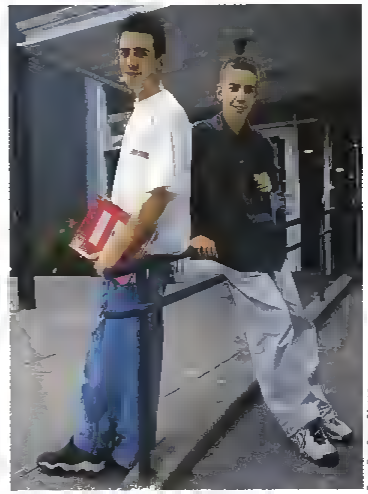
# Days of discontent

## Public school students face a new season of turmoil

By John Schofield

**It was the day** the music died at Lindsay Place High—and Scott Parker was feeling less than harmonious. As the 15-year-old tuba player returned to his suburban Montreal school late last month, he and his classmates found themselves in the middle of a provincewide work-to-rule campaign by teachers. Gone were the band practices, football games and a host of other extracurricular activities. Last week, Parker's biggest concern was the fate of the band's planned trip to Florida next spring: all summer long, he and his trombone-playing twin, Ross, raised money so they could take part in a competition at Disney World in April. Not surprisingly, the job action has most students and parents in an uproar. "It's an emotional issue," says Joan Parker, the boys' mother. "We support our teachers, but the kids are suffering, and the government doesn't seem to know or care."

As the new school year begins, a fresh season of turmoil is brewing throughout Canada's public schools. The Quebec dispute—part of a larger battle between the provincial government and public sector workers—is potentially the most explosive, with the possibility of 80,000 teachers striking later this fall. But smaller skirmishes are breaking out across the country. In British Columbia, negotiators for 25 school boards are locking horns with the province's 24,000 educational support workers. Alberta is still abuzz over a decision last month by the province's minister of learning, Lyle Oberg, to dismiss all seven trustees of the Calgary board of education, saying the group was "dysfunctional." Separate school teachers in Calgary have slapped their own work-to-rule ban on extracurricular activities. And in Ontario, where students face their first strike-free autumn in two years, teachers are contending with a massive overhaul of the province's secondary school curriculum, which remained incomplete as students began classes. "Teachers are going back with mixed emotions," says Earl Manners, president of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation. "They're unsure of what the future holds."



Pierre Paul Poulin/Magma

*Ross and Scott Parker: band practice is cancelled*

While the details differ, most of the quarrels come down to two critical issues: how money is spent and how education is to be controlled. In their relentless drive to cut costs, many governments have unleashed an all-out bid to seize greater power over schools. In many areas, school boards have lost the right to collect property taxes or conduct contract negotiations. And as the struggle rages, it is leaving behind a messy trail of strikes, angry school boards and unhappy parents.

Nothing embodies the current malaise more than the Quebec fight. After 10 years without a raise, teachers want an 11-per-cent increase over three years, a far cry from the government's offer of five per cent for all public-sector workers. The average salary for teachers now stands at $44,000 a year, well below the national average of $50,000. Union negotiators also want protection from proposals that would give principals sweeping new powers to determine a teacher's workload. The government maintains that teachers effectively work part time because of their long holidays. The unions argue that, with extracurricular activities and after-school marking thrown in, they deserve the same pay as full-time civil servants with similar qualifications. If the province refuses to budge, the teachers may refuse to write interim reports. A general strike could follow as early as November. "Teachers are in a fighting mood," says Pierre Weber, president of the Quebec Provincial Association of Teachers. "They have nothing to lose and everything to gain."

The same frustration is fuelling labour tensions in other provinces. The Calgary separate school board's 2,500 teachers cancelled extracurricular activities this month to press demands for guaranteed preparation time. Last week, board officials won the right to lock out the teachers with 72 hours notice. Workload is also an issue in Manitoba, where compulsory binding arbitration has ensured labour peace since 1957. Teachers are on a collision course with the government over a new law that takes away their right to arbitrate issues such as class size and teachers' schedules. The Manitoba Teachers' Society is capitaliz-

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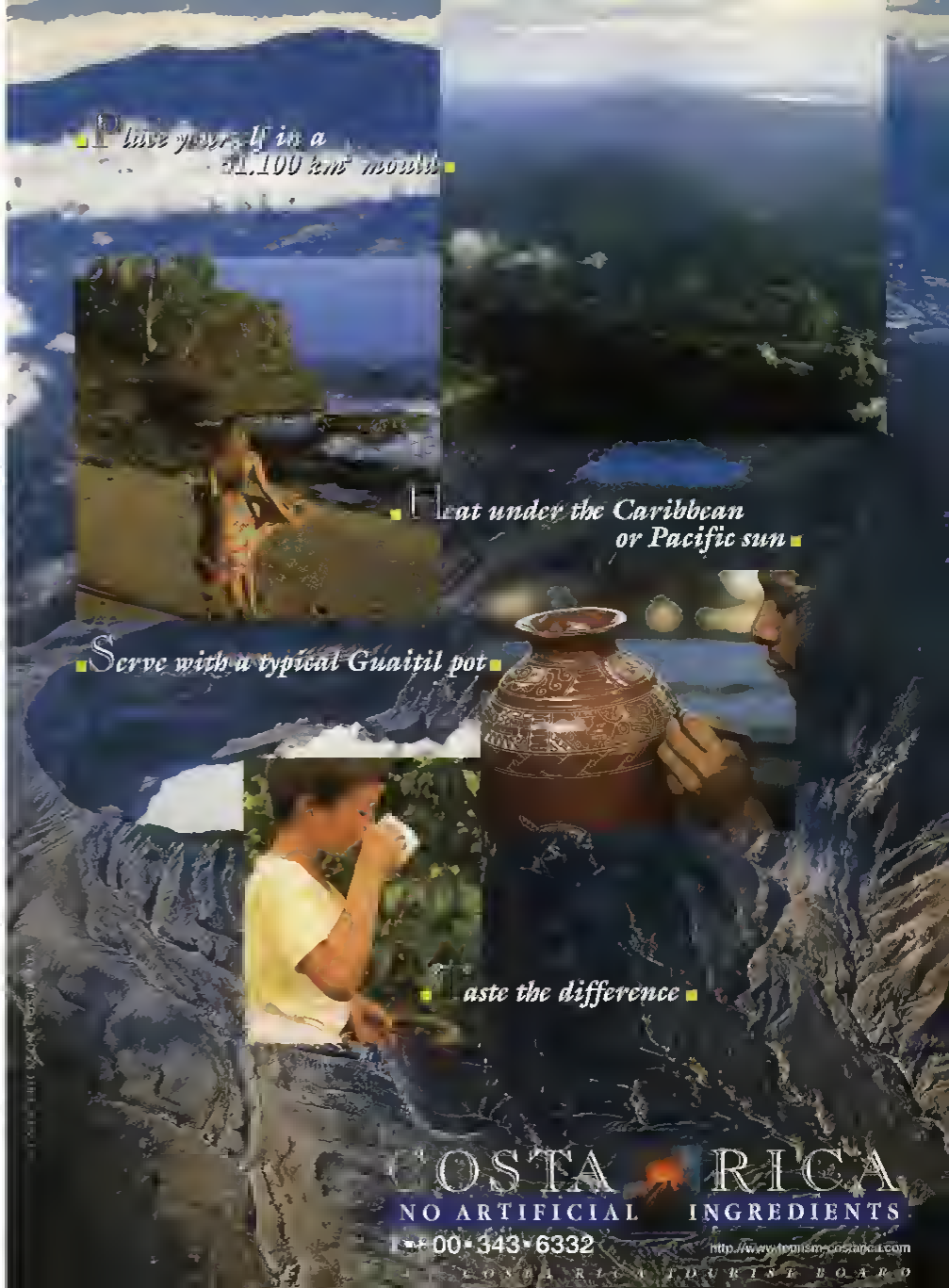

## Education

ing on the current provincial election campaign to air its grievances, and NDP Leader Gary Doer has vowed to strike down the law if elected.

In other regions, teachers are still reeling from recent reforms. The elimination of Newfoundland's denominational school system delayed the opening of at least 12 schools this month in the St. John's area, as the Avalon East school board completed the conversion of high schools to middle schools. Ontario teachers are still waiting for 60 per cent of the new curriculum for students in Grades 9 and 10, and are concerned about a controversial proposal for teacher testing, which the government has yet to fully explain. And in British Columbia, the unrest extends to other workers, as well: a challenge to the traditional bargaining practice could spark strikes this fall by school support staff, including secretaries, custodians and teachers' aides.

As the animosity escalates, governments seem increasingly willing to flex their muscles. Witness Alberta's Oberg, who dismissed the Calgary school board's seven trustees late last month. He criticized the board's internal bickering, especially following the publication of several notes that two trustees allegedly exchanged during the course of several meetings. One missive referred to two opposing trustees as "those bitches." Last month, Oberg turned interim control over to George Cornish, the city's former chief commissioner, and a school board byelection is slated for November. "It was 100-per-cent political," says former trustee Jennifer Pollock, "and 100-per-cent the wrong reason to remove a board." Oberg disagrees. "Their hatred of each other was making it impossible for them to run as a cohesive unit."

As parents and students weather the re-entry to yet another school year, patience is at a breaking point. "Everybody is feeling that school this year won't nearly be as good as it has been in the past," says Scott Parker. "It's kind of disorienting—people aren't too sure when it's going to end." By all indications, not any time soon. m



Rollercoaster *scene: a skeletal landscape of faded adolescence*

# Hollywood stars and Canadian style

**By Brian D. Johnson**

## Toronto's festival is awash with big names and quirky films

**In 1976,** when Bill Marshall launched the first incarnation of the Toronto International Film Festival, he planned it as a one-two punch. The idea was to attract Hollywood stars to put the event on the map. Then local producers, such as himself, would be able use it as a glitzy showcase for Canadian movies. The only problem in those early days was finding stars who were willing to show up—and finding Canadian movies worth celebrating.

Now, 24 years later, the Toronto festival (Sept. 9 to 18) is second in importance only to Cannes. And it has more stars than it knows what to do with. This year's guest list includes Denzel Washington, Robin Williams, Holly Hunter, Kevin Spacey, Sean Penn, Claudia Schiffer, Elton John, Ralph Fiennes, Matt Damon, Susan Sarandon, Sigourney Weaver, Bruce Willis, Nick Nolte and Catherine Deneuve. Canadian filmmakers, meanwhile, have popped into prominent focus. From *Felicia's Journey*, a haunting portrait of a serial killer by Toronto veteran Atom Egoyan, to *Rollercoaster*, a jarring descent into teenage delirium by Vancouver novice Scott Smith, Canadians are challenging Hollywood formula with an assertive sense of style.

If one clear trend emerges from their latest crop of films—at least from English Canada—it is the episodic narrative and the ensemble cast. Last year, Don McKellar directed a millennial rollcall of the Canadian acting community with *Last Night*. This year, another Toronto writer-director, Jeremy Podeswa, marshals multiple protagonists around the drama of a missing child in *The Five Senses*. The story explores the lives of various neighbours, each representing one of the senses: a peeping tomboy of a babysitter who lets the child out of her sight, a baker with jaded taste buds, a gay housecleaner with a sensitive nose, an ophthalmologist who is going deaf, and a massage therapist who feels everyone's pain but her own.

With his second feature, Podeswa, 37, displays an assured touch, framing fine-tuned performances with beautifully textured images. But except for the baker (Mary-Louise Parker) and the mother of the missing child (Molly Parker), the characters seem suspended in a kind of trance, as if frozen in aspic. And despite the originality of its conceit, *The Five Senses* is eerily reminiscent of Egoyan. It is, after all, an acutely measured, densely atmospheric drama about alienation, loss, voyeurism—and babysitting.

Jerry Ciccoritti offers a less freighted ensemble piece with *The Life Before This*, a sushi-sliced narrative similar in style to Robert Altman's *Short Cuts*. It opens with a random shooting in a café, then rewinds to trace the 12 hours leading up to it in the lives of the victims, witnesses and perpetrators. Exploring how fate can turn on the slightest nuance, the drama hinges on a variety of compact, gem-like performances. Catherine O'Hara is a scream as a skittish bridal consultant looking for love. Stephen Rea (*The Crying Game*) plays a sadly catatonic exterminator devastated by his daughter's death. And the mercurial Sarah Polley shows up as a waitress flirting with commitment after moving in with her boyfriend.

In his two previous features, *Paris, France* and *Boy Meets Girl*, Ciccoritti's directorial flair has been squandered on baroquely overwrought material. But with *The Life Before This*, deftly scripted by Toronto screenwriter Semi Chellas, he creates a compelling impressionist drama from a series of spare brushstrokes. To say it has its moments is to say a great deal, for this is a movie that consists uniquely of moments, those random points where destiny




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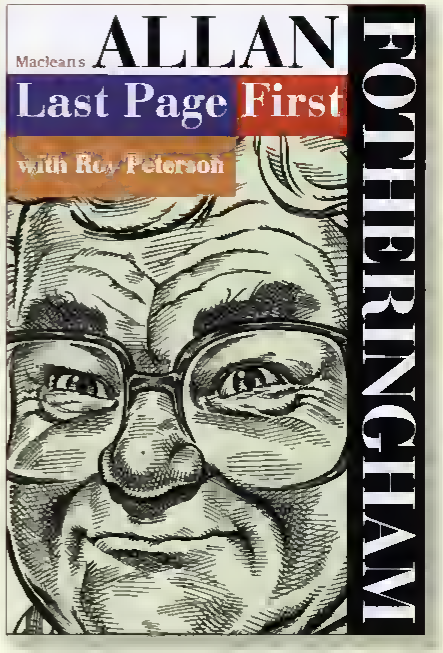
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*Polley: random moments when destiny catches up with people*

catches up with people's lives.

The festival's program also includes half a dozen feature debuts from young Canadian filmmakers, notably *Rollercoaster*, written and directed by the 29-year-old Smith. Yet another ensemble piece, it is about five teens who hop the fence of a defunct Vancouver amusement park to pursue a dangerous fantasy. Two of them, Darrin (Kett Turton) and Chloe (Crystal Bublé), are planning a lovers' leap from the top of the roller-coaster after nightfall. Until then, with the help of an unctuous security guard, the teens run riot in the park and activate the rides. While the suicide pact provides the narrative arc, Smith plants a time bomb of a subplot involving the sexual paranoia of Darrin's best friend, Stick, played by Brendan Fletcher (*Little Criminals*). And Fletcher—who also appears in *The Five Senses* and in Canadian Davor Marjanovic's debut, *My Father's Angel*—proves to be an explosive talent.

Although the script's payoff falls shy of its promise, *Rollercoaster* contains some exhilarating filmmaking. The derelict midway, with dusk settling over the mountains behind it, serves as an extraordinary setting, a skeletal landscape of faded adolescence. Smith's aggressively kinetic camera embodies the energy of the actors. And his dark scenario coolly subverts teen-movie cliché, along with the whole Hollywood notion of the movie-as-roller-coaster.

Tales of delinquency also feature in fare from French Canada, but in a more conventional style. In *Full Blast*, director Rodrigue Jean, an Acadian from New Brunswick, makes his feature debut with a grim, barroom-sink drama about loser guys scraping the dregs of sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll. More engaging is *Emporte-moi* by Montreal veteran Léa Poole. It is her sixth feature, but she perfects the kind of autobiographical coming-of-age film that most directors attempt their first time out.

It is about a 13-year-old girl (Karine Vanasse) who is at odds with her Québécois mother (Pascale Bussières) and Jewish immigrant father (Miki Manojlovic)—and who deeply identifies with the doomed heroine of Jean-Luc Godard's *Vivre sa vie*. Due to show at the exclusive New York Film Festival (Sept. 24 to Oct. 10), *Emporte-moi* marks a breakthrough for Poole, a moving portrait of the artist as a young woman.

Toronto director Patricia Rozema paints a more lavish portrait of the artist with *Mansfield Park*, playing Toronto after it opened the Montreal World Film Festival last month. Her adaptation of the 1814 Jane Austen novel, bolstered by the author's letters and journals, is a marvel of wit and beauty that upstages Merchant-Ivory on their own English turf. No, it is not a Canadian film, it was produced by the almighty Miramax. But Rozema has left her incisive signature on the script and on the direction, which feels fresh and modern without violating the period setting. She also has a superb cast that includes playwright Harold Pinter, Jonny Lee Miller, and Frances O'Connor as the headstrong heroine, Fanny Price. For Rozema—who spearheaded English Canada's new wave of personal cinema 12 years ago with *Five Heard the Mermaids Singing*—*Mansfield Park* marks a triumphant leap into the major leagues.

The influence of the Canadian filmmaking community now goes far beyond Canadian films. Take Sarah Polley. After making her name with Egoyan's *The Sweet Hereafter*, she now confronts the whole idea of stardom in the role of a nervous ingenue who falls for a roué photographer (Stephen Rea) in the festival's *Guinevere*, by American director Audrey Wells. Molly Parker, meanwhile, is ubiquitous. Aside from *The Five Senses*, she gives tour-de-force performances as a pregnant Englishwoman in Michael Winterbottom's *Wonderland* and as a Hungarian Holocaust victim in István Szabó's *Sunshine*.

Starring Ralph Fiennes in three roles spanning three generations, *Sunshine* is the year's most ambitious Canadian film, even if the only Canadian thing about it is the passion of its Toronto producer for his Hungarian roots. In 1978, Budapest-born Robert Lantos launched his career at the Toronto festival with *In Praise of Older Women*, a lame sex comedy about a Hungarian immigrant that inflamed censors and caused a near riot at its première. With *Sunshine*, Lantos comes full circle.

Also this week, Toronto's Hollywood veteran Norman Jewison unveils *The Hurricane*, the story of boxer Rubin (Hurricane) Carter. At last, Jewison has made a movie set in his home town—and starring Denzel Washington, an actor he introduced to the Toronto festival audience at the 1984 premiere of *A Soldier's Story*. Bill Marshall's dream to have Hollywood stars share an international spotlight with Canadian moviemakers has come true in more ways than he could ever have imagined. m

# Romancing the Reader

## Heady doses of love—and lust—keep romance novel fans intensely loyal

By John Bemrose






*Illustration from* The Perfect Hero *manly men remain in style*

**Everyone knows how** the story goes. Girl meets boy. They fall for each other, but alas, there are obstacles. Finally love prevails, and they stand together at the altar, presumably to live happily ever after. Presumably—because every romance, whether book, play or movie, ends here, just where hope for the future reaches a throbbing crescendo.

The basic romantic plot has scarcely changed in centuries. It was a favourite vehicle for Greek and Roman storytellers, as well as for Shakespeare, Jane Austen and Charles Dickens. It has powered the careers of movie stars from Charlie Chaplin to Julia Roberts. And it has sold more books than any other genre in the history of publishing: an estimated 50 million women in North America read romances, while such novels make up a whopping 50 per cent of all mass-market paperbacks. And Canada—long notorious as a stronghold of everything dowdy, commonsensical and yes, non-romantic—is a major player. The Toronto-based Harlequin Enterprises Ltd., which this year celebrates its 50th anniversary, is the largest publisher anywhere, accounting for half of all romance paperbacks sold on the planet.

As well, Canadian romance writers such as Virginia Henley, Marsha Canham and Jo Beverley are among the most popular in the business. This week, dozens of authors will rub shoulders with thousands of fans at the 16th annual *Romantic Times* Booklovers Convention, named for the influential New York City-based trade magazine that sponsors it. In a long-overdue tribute to this country's romance publishing industry, the event is being held for the first time in Canada—from Sept. 16 to 19 in Toronto. The event will feature book signings, costume parties for historical-romance addicts, and even an all-male cover model contest. As well, Newfoundland film-maker Barbara Doran will premiere her National Film Board documentary, *The Perfect Hero*, a wry yet sympathetic look at romance writers and their readers—virtually all of whom are women.

The Toronto celebration comes at a time when the romance genre has undergone major changes. True, all romances still end happily, and the market still breaks down almost evenly between bodice-rippers—the traditional historical romances where sex is often stormy and graphic—and contemporary tales where love crops up anywhere the genders meet, from the office watercooler to Internet chat rooms. But now, within those two broad camps, buyers can choose among such categories as time-travel, African-American romances, romances featuring the handicapped, erotic, mystery and suspense romances, comic romances and even Christian romances focusing on God-fearing couples for whom the height of excitement is a shy goodnight kiss.

Heroines, too, have changed. Gone are the prim, modest and decidedly passive young women of earlier decades: the nurses and manicure girls hoping to catch some wealthy Mr. Right. Now, romance protagonists are more likely to be business executives or sky divers, and they know how to demand respect and erotic stimulation in equal measure. There are limits, however. Ottawa writer Claire Harrison, who wrote more than a dozen romances before switching to mainstream fiction, recalls another author's 1980s story in which the heroine had an abortion; it drew an avalanche of negative mail. Since then, abortions are as rare as flabby abs in romance novels. "The heroine has to love children, and even in the hardest circumstances does not do that kind of thing," Harrison says. "She sees marriage, or at least some committed bond between man and woman as the fulfilment of her life. Even if she has a professional career, she's still the expert of the domestic zone."

The same cautious mixture of traditional and liberal values shapes contemporary romance heroes too. Although the men have definitely grown more thoughtful and sensitive—no longer quite what Ajax, Ont.-based author Marsha Canham terms "these big, macho, slam-bam type creatures"—they have not exactly turned into Milquetoasts. In fact, the manly man is still very much in style: mysterious, forceful—but also in need of a little educating in matters of the heart. It is the glory of contemporary romance heroines that they manage to soften up the beast in the manly breast. Or as *Romantic Times* founder and CEO Kathryn Falk puts it: "The heroine's whole struggle is to get an alpha male to commit."

It's astounding how much variety some romance writers can wring from this simple formula. The British writer



Rick Ohlen © Maclean's

*Canham: 'We're not considered highbrow enough'*

Barbara Cartland—at 98, the undisputed queen of the genre—has published 688 romance novels, for a total of 750 million copies in 36 languages. Looking magnificently overdressed in a pink suit and gobs of flashy jewelry, the British author archly delivers her opinions on romance writing in *The Perfect Hero*. The great lady, Doran says, was a headache to film. When she politely asked Cartland to remove her pet dog from her lap—"it was breathing all over the sound track," the director recalls—the author snapped back at her, "I'd rather have you leave the house." The dog stayed.

Another star of Doran's film is the Canadian author of 16 historical romances, Virginia Henley, a 63-year-old grandmother whose distinct combination of hot sex scenes and vivid recreations of past eras earns her close to $1 million a year. Twenty-three years ago, Henley was a frustrated Scarborough housewife looking after two sons, her husband and widowed father—who to Henley's dismay spent hours watching sports on TV. "I thought, 'Oh God, I've got to have something for myself or I'm going to go crazy,'" Reading a historical romance by the popular American writer, Kathleen Woodiwiss, Henley realized: "I can do this." Having no room of her own to work in, she began writing and researching on the living-room coffee table, concentrating ferociously to block out the sounds of the TV. A year later, she had produced her first novel, *The Irish Gypsy* (later republished as *Enticed*). Several Canadian publishers turned it down, before Avon in New York published it. Today, the best-selling author makes her home in Florida, where she works 14-hour days and relaxes with walks on the beach. Her husband, Arthur, a retired Ontario civil servant, cleans and cooks.

Henley's romances have an almost primitive appeal. "For my hero, I usually pick a dark, dominant and dangerous man," she says. "And then I create a woman who is a match for him—or, in most cases, more than a match," she adds with a chuckle. She then creates situations where the sexual tension between hero and heroine mounts steadily. Her 1996 novel, *Enslaved*, focuses on Lady Diana Davenport, a young,

## Love and lucre

**Romance fiction** is a serious business. Should there be any doubt about that, consider the case of tiny Winnipeg-based Ponder Publishing Inc. Launched in October, 1996, by Mary Barton and her sister, Pamela Walford, Ponder has produced just three books and sales have been small, says Barton, who has kept her accounting job with a Manitoba hotel chain. Nevertheless, Barton, 36, and Walford, 42, are embroiled in a legal dispute with Toronto-based Harlequin Enterprises Inc., the world's largest publisher of romance fiction. Their mistake: seeking a federal trademark for the term Ponder Romance. Harlequin is objecting to their use of the word romance. "We never imagined we could be confused with them," says Barton.

But Harlequin isn't taking any chances. The romance publisher has become No. 1 through timely acquisitions, astute marketing and, according to some industry observers, flexing its muscle when necessary. Harlequin, owned by Torstar Corp., publisher of *The Toronto Star*, sells about 160 million books annually in 24 languages and more than 100 countries, generating revenues last year of $525 million and a profit of nearly $88 million. The company publishes paperbacks in different product lines, each with a set look and length to enhance reader loyalty. "They do branding, and they've perfected it," says Carrie Feron, executive editor of New York City-based Avon Books, which has a small romance division.

Other publishers have a different approach. Avon publishes hardcovers and paperbacks of various lengths and prices. As well, the company promotes individual writers. "We're selling authors," says Feron, "not product lines."

Harlequin, by comparison, relies on standardization. Its 13 different North American series each have three key specifications—the number of titles issued monthly, page length and price, which can range from $3.50 to $4.75. What distinguishes them, says Katherine Orr, Harlequin's vice-president of public relations, is the "level of sensuality." For instance, the company publishes four books monthly under its steamy Harlequin Temptation label. The stories contain "conflict and sizzling sexual tension," according to promotional literature, and one or two acts of lovemaking. The conflicts are resolved within the prescribed 220 pages, because in Harlequin books—as in the business behind them—romance rules.

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# The Elderly Driver



By Dennis DesRosiers

I wrote an article earlier this year entitled "Your Child's First Vehicle." The article reviewed a number of factors which parents should consider when helping their children purchase or lease their first vehicle. I received a number of comments from readers asking for advice on the other end of the spectrum. For some, their parents' vehicle purchase, rather than their children's, posed more difficulty.

Therefore, I thought it would be interesting to write an article about the elderly drivers and their vehicle purchase. Actually, this group probably represents a larger group of vehicle owners than teenagers.

As I developed my research and thinking for this article, the more apparent it became that many of us fall into a trap when thinking of the "elderly," particularly when it comes to this age group driving cars.

I feel we may not really be stopping to ask ourselves what the word elderly means in today's world. We tend to have some negative attitudes about the capabilities of the elderly and we often have preconceived notions, perhaps even prejudices.

As population demographics evolve, aging parents represent an increasingly large portion of the population. Better medical care, more attention to healthy, positive lifestyles and other factors have resulted in this population bulge of older people. However, this grey segment represents a generation of people that I would hesitate to call elderly in the traditional sense of the word. Just as John Glenn went on a successful space mission last year at the age of 77, many older people are highly productive and effective and cannot be compartmentalized into a general group perceived as being handicapped.

The Boomer group, sometimes known as the sandwich generation, often has a dual responsibility. Boomers are frequently helping to support older children either at home or on their own as well as helping aging parents in a variety of areas. This may include concerns about the driving capabilities of an aging parent.

However, age is not necessarily a determinant of driving ability. I suspect that most drivers beyond retirement age are better drivers than younger people because of their greater experience and emotional outlook regarding driving. So, rather than basing this article solely on an age factor, I prefer to base it on the driving capabilities of the "elderly." If you are provid-

ing various forms of support for an aging parent or parents, you know that one of the most important factors in their well-being is a positive mental outlook.

The ability to continue to be able to perform tasks and routines, such as driving to the shopping mall, to social engagements or driving while on vacation is important to the older population. It is vital for older people to have a sense of independence. Being able to drive their vehicle is an important part of this. Everything possible should be done to keep an older person active and being able to get around in a vehicle is a very important element of this.

However, although aging no longer automatically means a rapid decline into ineffectiveness, the reality is that, as we age, our reaction times are slower, our vision is not as good, and our stamina is not as great. These are all visible signs of aging, which is something difficult to accept. Therefore, children of aging parents should do whatever they can — realistically — to keep their parents safely on the road, and I stress safely. A vehicle can be an unintentional weapon in the hands of an unsafe driver. Adult children should ensure their parents do not add to the accident toll on our highways. Whether you are helping your parents with their vehicle purchase, or providing advice to keep them actively driving, there are a number of actions you can recommend.

- Encourage parents to take driver training courses and/or driving refresher courses.
- Make sure they belong to some sort of roadside assistance program, such as the Canadian Automobile Association (CAA) so if they require mechanical or other assistance they can phone and get immediate help.
- Suggest they get a cellular phone. There are cellular programs which have inexpensive monthly rates if the phone is used only for emergencies.
- Try to influence them to buy a vehicle which complements their physical abilities.
- Stress the importance of regular medical checkups including vision testing. If you cannot bring yourself to tell your parents they can no longer drive safely perhaps your doctor can do it for you.
- Remember that if an aging parent has a physical disability, cars


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*Impreza, World Rally Manufacturers' Champion 1995, 1996, 1997*

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can often be adapted to compensate.

- If there are physical problems such as night vision difficulties, help the parent to understand the need for driving only during daylight hours. If stamina is a problem encourage them to drive for shorter distances with rest stops.

In choosing a vehicle, some of the factors which should be considered are similar to those for your child's first vehicle, which I wrote about in a previous issue of Maclean's. Briefly, they include:

- Always buy a newer or new vehicle for their safety features and general reliability, if at all possible. I accept that a large segment of our elderly population do not have the economic means to buy a new or newer vehicle but every effort should be made since newer vehicles are so much safer than older vehicles.
- Make sure the vehicle handles easily — although a vehicle should be large enough to be safe, it should not be too large for the driver to handle effectively.
- Pay particular attention to the ergonomics. Seating comfort is a priority. A younger driver can put up with discomfort. A senior, especially one with a bad back, needs to be comfortable. An easy-to-read instrument panel and easy-to-reach and use dials for radios and options are also important.
- Because of this, have parents take an extended test drive of the vehicle with different driving conditions.
- Ensure that the vehicle has good sightlines, with minimal blind spots.
- Seek the advice of a qualified salesperson who understands the needs of the elderly driver. Few 35-year-olds can relate to their needs, so find a salesperson closer to your parents' age.
- Be aware of the probable insurance and operating costs for the vehicle being considered.
- Overall, the vehicle chosen should be appropriate for the buyer's age, and economic circumstances.

For example, I would generally not recommend that an older person buy a monster truck such as a full-size sports utility vehicle (SUV). Such a vehicle may be hard to handle for an older person. They are also expensive to buy and expensive to run. Basically, they are an unnecessary purchase for an aging parent, although they could be just the right purchase for someone at a different stage in life. Indeed, purchase data I have seen indicates that most seniors buy four-door intermediate or compact sedan passenger cars, not light trucks.

Although I have mentioned that economics should be a consideration, I am not necessarily recommending that an aging parent buy the cheapest vehicle available. At this stage in life, parents have earned the right to the best vehicle they can afford. Convenience and luxury features can be added to make driving easier and more rewarding.

Moreover, with the tendency of older people to accumulate less than average mileage on their vehicles, the car will last longer, so the price will be amortized over a greater period. Generally elderly people drive their vehicles on average 8,000 to 10,000 km per year, while the average is 20,000 to 25,000 km per year. Since there is less wear and tear, the vehicle will generally not require as much aftermarket or repair work. This too will save money. If your parents can get eight to 10 years out of their vehicle, with it remaining in relatively good shape, the initial investment in a more fully optioned car should be worth the extra initial expense.

The technology for adapting vehicles to the needs of drivers with disabilities is steadily improving. However, some modifications cannot be done unless the vehicle has been initially designed to accommodate these adaptations. When purchasing a car, check with the dealer to make sure it can be modified in the manner your parent requires. A common driver adaptation is a lever-control for throttle and brakes. In addition to adaptations for drivers, there are some for passengers. This includes modifications to allow the removal of a passenger seat for a wheelchair. Minivans are popular with drivers with disabilities due to their versatility.

To assist economically with this, the Department of Finance is proposing that a GST/HST rebate be made available for that portion of the purchase price involving a number of disability adaptations on new vehicles or vehicles newly modified for disabilities. Check with your accountant.

I have stressed the importance of keeping your parents on the road to give them more freedom, independence and dignity. However, there may come a time when an aging parent, for safety reasons, simply should not be driving, or should be driving only under restricted conditions. In this case, experts recommend that this message to parents be delivered with compassion and love, not in a manner which makes the aging person feel they are no longer productive or useful. This often is best done by the family physician who is in a better position than the children to impartially judge ability ■



## There is a wide range of sexual explicitness, from demure to blunt

single society woman frustrated with the restrictions of 18th-century England. When she tries on an antique Roman helmet, she is catapulted back in time to Aquae Sulis—the old Roman name for the English city of Bath. There, she becomes the prisoner of the general, Marcus Magnus—described on the novel's jacket as "powerful, arrogant and infuriating. A real man." Marcus tries to makes Diana his sex slave, and though she postpones surrendering to him, ultimately the sexual action—fuelled by a growing love between the two—explodes. "I like to put the reader in bed between the hero and the heroine and let her in on all their secrets," declares Henley, who likes to call body parts by their blunt, Anglo-Saxon names.

Henley's sexual candour is a far cry from the poetic vagueness that surrounds the love-making in many romance novels, where genitals are evoked by such awkward euphemisms as "her feminine nest" or "that hot, hard, straining part." In fact, romances offer a wide range of sexual explicitness, from what people in the industry call the "sweet" end of the scale all the way to the "sensual," which is really a form of soft porn. Readers can judge the books by the paintings (thought to be more romantically suggestive than photographs) of the love-struck couples on their covers. The more fervent and suggestive their poses, the sexier the contents.



Kevin Harvey/SIPA

*Cartland in 1991, now 98, the genre's undisputed queen*

If fans of these novels like to vicariously enjoy a good love affair, many of them are falling in love with the idea of writing a romance themselves. All through the western world, thousands of would-be authors are toiling away on manuscripts they hope will spirit them to a new way of life. The Toronto crime writer Rosemary Aubert, who has both written and edited romance novels, thinks there are profound similarities between the desire for romantic love and the desire to be a published author. "In the case of romantic love, people have this fantasy that if they can just find the right person, all the problems of their lives will be solved. Well, would-be writers have the same idea, they imagine that if they can just turn out a successful novel everything will be fine from then on. Of course, it's not true."

One reason it's not true is that the odds are so steep. Marsha Zinberg, a senior editor at Harlequin, estimates that the company publishes only one out of every 200 manuscripts it receives (unlike most romance publishers, Harlequin still reads all unsolicited novels). Yet she has watched many writers persist and improve through several unpublishable manuscripts before one is finally accepted. Most of these authors, though, never become rich. "When authors start out with us, they're definitely going to keep their day jobs," Zinberg says. Harlequin authors typically receive advances in the $2,000-$3,000 range, and may go on to earn up to $20,000 for a single title. Since Harlequin publishes more than 70 new romances every month, each novel only has those four weeks to grab attention at the front of the shelves. "Yet the good thing about writing for Harlequin," Zinberg says, "is that it's a worldwide company. So even after a book is taken off the stands in North America, it may be picked up in Spain or Greece. Two years down the road, it could still be earning royalties."

What does Zinberg look for in new manuscripts? Although she says she is irked by bad spelling and grammar, she will tolerate such fixable flaws if the author has real storytelling ability. "There are things like a writer's unique voice, as well as a sense of pacing, that can't really be taught," Zinberg says. But for someone who possesses such gifts, the craft of shaping stories can be refined. Zinberg recommends that neophyte authors join groups that teach romance writing, such as The Romance Writers of America, which has several chapters across Canada. "You also have to know the market," Zinberg insists, "Read widely, and know exactly what kind of romance you want to write."



Steve Granitz/ Retna/Pension Issue

*Fabio, from book covers to international stardom*

This raises the perennial question of formula: there seems to be a prevalent myth that romances are written to exact specifications—as if there were some rule that the first kiss has to come by page 24. This notion raises the ire of many authors. "Formula is not really the right word," insists Aubert. "I wish there was a formula, because with a formula all you have to do is plug it in and it gives you the right answer." Aubert says she prefers the word "convention"—romance's happy ending is one example—and she points out that mystery or science fiction authors have observed the conventions of their cho-

## The genre has its own culture of clubs, magazines and even a convention

sen genre without enduring the same sort of mockery romance authors have. Yet the most successful romance writers, according to *Romantic Times*'s Falk, manage to "expand the envelope of what's acceptable. They expand the conventions." Or as Henley insists: "I've always written exactly what I've wanted and the publishers have left me alone because it's made money."

The best popular romances—though they may not qualify as high literature—have an addictive appeal for many women. Some devour as many as 12 a week. For Mary Waters of Vancouver, a lifelong fan of Harlequin Romances, the appeal is simple. "It's nice to have these little daydreams about someone coming along and taking care of you and all that," says the 41-year-old single florist. "Truth is, if someone tried to, I'd probably think they are controlling and run away from the relationship. But for an hour or two, which is all it takes to read a Harlequin, what's the big deal?"

Such loyalty to the genre has spawned its own culture. Thousands of romance readers keep in touch by e-mail, and flock to book signings to chat with their favourite authors. And the authors themselves—hungry to break away from the vast pack of the competition—often post their own ads on the Internet or in *Romantic Times*, or woo bookstore owners with free handouts such as bookmarks. The culture of romance seems to be particularly fervid south of the border. Canham says she prefers to do book signings in the United States where fans "line up for hours." And she chafes at the lack of attention the Canadian media has paid to her work, which has won several U.S. book industry prizes. "I've had one review up here," she laments—"In the North Bay *Nugget*. We're not considered highbrow enough up here. Romances sell well in Canada, but no one likes to admit they read them."



*Henley with model: 'I put the reader in bed between the hero and the heroine'*

The promoters of the *Romantic Times* conference will be working hard to raise the genre's profile in Canada. They expect to draw a lot of media attention, not all of it flattering, with their annual cover model pageant. Strangely reminiscent of ladies' night in a strip club, the contest features handsome, long-haired young men showing off their naked torsos for the romance fans. Standing with a female model inside a large frame that simulates a book cover, each contestant gazes into her eyes as passionately as he can. He also answers such questions as "What do you think of older women?" Past winners have gone on to lucrative careers modelling for the covers of romances—hoping to follow in the footsteps of Fabio, who parlayed his success as a romance pinup boy into international stardom. Although some romance writers have criticized the pageant as dated and sexist, Falk defends it, saying, "Women like looking at these fellows. They're tall, larger than life, and they look like they could protect a woman. It kind of goes back to the caveman days when the biggest hunter got the biggest piece of meat and had the healthiest companion and had the best cave."

In fact, the power at the core of romance writing seems irrepressible. Many feminists have inveighed against the genre, claiming it encourages unrealistic expectations in women. But Virginia Henley insists that "women are too smart to confuse fantasy and reality. They turn to these books when they want to be swept away to a place where they don't have to worry about the cleaning, or the husband out of work, or the kids on drugs. There are really no messages in what I write. It's just like a box of chocolates." Claire Harrison goes further: "These kind of books can show that a man is a wonderful thing. A reader might well look at the man in her life and say, 'Oh, he's not so bad. He has some elements of a hero.' These books encourage hope; surely that's not such a bad thing."

*With Ruth Atherley in Vancouver*


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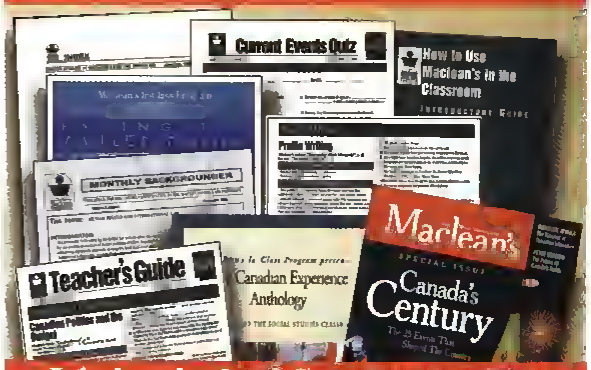
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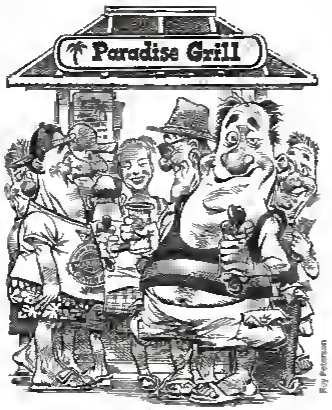
Allan Fotheringham

# No story here, boss

**As the summer days** dwindle down to a precious few, on my island in the Pacific all is calm. The deer dash across the up-hill-and-down-dale road that twists and winds through the primeval forest.

The lads at the outdoor tables outside the coffee shop are regulars in the early sunshine, talking philosophy and weighty subjects before they head off for their welfare cheques. At the garage sale outside the police office, there are three used computers.

The most sought-after guest at the dinner parties is the lady who had a personal invitation to the Sophie Rhys-Jones-Prince Eddy wedding, being a friend of the family when she spent 30 years in England. The locals could spot her via the telly in the Windsor Castle chapel.




The annual one-day tennis tournament is won by a judge who, his friends claim, has been in charge of the seedings for decades in hopes of manoeuvring himself into the final. They grudgingly admit that at his age, fit as a fiddle, he deserves his reward.

On my island in the Pacific, *The New York Times*, printed in Portland, Ore., arrives at 8:30 each morning. That is civilized. At the only grocery store in the village—fondly known by the locals as the Korean Mint—the Sunday edition, which gives even the clerks a hernia, is $7.05. We don't know where the GST comes into that, but Ottawa would.

The locals still talk about the robber who was shot and killed by the caretaker as the thief was diving out the window of the log cabin overlooking the bay. That was in 1937. A poster nailed to a telephone pole advertises the New Island Theatre: "*Love Letters*, a play. Back by Popular Demand 'rave reviews—a rare treat.' Tickets $8.00."

The cottage does not contain television or radio. But the world's best tape deck. Artie Shaw. Billie Holiday. The incomparable Stephane Grappelli on his jazz violin. George Shearing. Gerry Mulligan. Handel's Water Music. The great blues shouter Joe Williams. The Duke and the Count. The Philadelphia Orchestra with Eugene Ormandy. Dinah Washington. Glenn Miller. Schubert. Chopin's *Polonaise in A Flat*. And the Andrews Sisters. Pure bliss.

From the cottage deck on my island in the Pacific, a mountain range can be viewed. All the locals proudly point out "the sleeping de Gaulle"—a positioning of peaks that clearly show the magnificent visage of Charles at rest.

Not far away, hidden in the forest, is Lake Killarney, a preserved piece of paradise that is filled with serene water lilies, so delightful in the morning sunshine one could swear it is a Claude Monet print, derived from his fascination with those same flowers. A path around the lake is the finest 50-minute walk therapy ever devised.

Luckiest of all are the couple, fine dinner hosts, who teach at Cambridge. She has written biographies on Emily Carr and Fred Varley, he of Group of Seven fame. He is a professor of modern history who has a book skewering prime ministers from Gladstone to Blair. "Just occasionally vulgar," judged the *Sunday Times*. Winter in Cambridge, summer on my island in the Pacific. Not bad.

At the annual parade in the village, the "Citizen of the Year," displayed in a convertible, is the guy who runs the recycling dump. There are, returned from the dead, the Two Fat Ladies. The island's fire truck, of course, spraying the kids and tossing candy. And a float containing only "The Dog of the Year—Emily." Her qualifications are not known.

All the talk at the pub and on the tennis court is about the mysterious Vanessa. In her very short shorts she creates traffic jams in the parking lot outside the Sunday market, selling "smokies" from her stand called Paradise Grill. The Paradise Grill is about the size of a Volkswagen.

**Sinatra is played** in the background. Smokies are a Bavarian bratwurst. Vanessa appears only on weekends. She says she sells real estate. She would be late 30s. So would be her shorts. She also is a personal trainer, putting an ad in the local paper beckoning the men to come in and "work off those smokies." The wives on my island in the Pacific hate her.

No one talks about Glen Clark, East Timor, Adrienne Clarkson or the Saskatchewan election. La Mangerie, the café-bakery-deli, has the finest bread in the world and the world's slowest clerk who works "on island time." The salt air slows you down. There is a Paris-style open-air bookseller, complete with a Parisian beret.

The principal aim, on my island in the Pacific, is the annual brain transplant (badly needed, as certain letters-to-the-editor point out). Only the readers will know if it worked. But the deer do look lovely dashing across the road.



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